

Grace's Chatter – Spring 2022

Rev. Takouhi's Reflections – Easter 2022

Dear Grace United Church,

We have made a full circle once again and arrived at the most beautiful time of the year – Spring!

Spring is not only a time that lifts our spirits with the beautiful symphony that the birds offer us, with the honking of the geese, but also gives us a feast to our eyes and senses with the blossoming of colourful flowers and scents that wake us up from a slumber.

Easter Sunday is celebrated on the first Sunday following the Paschal Full Moon, which is the first full moon of Spring. This year, April 17 will be Easter Sunday, or as I like to refer to it, Resurrection Sunday. When we proclaim to each other and to the world, "Jesus Christ is Risen today" – "He is Risen indeed". These are victorious and celebratory words that followers of Jesus have greeted one another as early as 2nd century, (www.britannica.com). However, were the first Easter narratives so victorious?

After experiencing this lengthy pandemic of COVID-19, I have been thinking about the trauma and the survival after losing loved ones. All those who were unable to say goodbye or to attend the funeral of their loved ones.

Really think about it, the women came to honour Jesus in the only way they knew how when someone has died. They brought spices to the grave – but they found the tomb empty. This is a double terrifying ordeal to face. However, the story does not end there. They encountered 'men in dazzling clothes' (Luke 24:4) who reminded the women – in Jesus' own words – that he had predicted his death and resurrection. The Gospel Luke makes the point to write down that, 'Then they remembered his words' (Luke 24:8).

Beloved, how often have you remembered words from your loved ones, in times of terror and trauma, that have helped you carry on this journey called life? Sometimes, people may think that the Easter Narratives are idle tales of people who are utterly feeling lost. I know first-hand that Resurrection cannot be fully understood, even after completing three degrees at university, but this story helps us live through Trauma with **HOPE**. This is no fake news, but **TRUTH** telling stories.

Today, after two years of life with a pandemic, we may not understand how we are making it through these difficult days, but something, somewhere, somehow, we are finding the ways and the courage to carry through with **HOPE**. The trauma of the cross and the empty tomb never disappeared from the minds and hearts of those who experienced it first-hand, just like all of us who have been living through this pandemic and all those who have lived through war understand as well, how the trauma



of war never leaves those who experience it first-hand, but they find the strength to carry through their days with **HOPE**.

Beloved, remember the words of all those who have lived lives of courage and **HOPE** and find the "possible" in the im**POSSIBLE** of life, because nothing is impossible with God. And every single time we go to church or watch the virtual gatherings on YouTube, we are attempting to remember the words of Jesus and carry on this life with **HOPE**.

There are different Resurrection stories in the Gospels, because NO ONE, NO ONE, can capsule the entire, real story with one story. This year, I invite you to join the women in the Gospel of Luke, who go to the tomb, not knowing that it is empty, and in that emptiness, they find a new way of living – a Resurrected Life that still leads us with an abundant life even after his crucifixion.

Beloved, join the sounds and scents of Mother Nature and proclaim that Jesus Christ is Risen today and offer your life as an aroma of Grace to ALL you meet. Live in and through the Perfect Love of God and stop looking for the "living among the dead" like the 'men in dazzling clothes' (Luke 24: 4) informed the women.

I remain humbly within God's Grace – Your Servant-Leader,

Rev. Takouhi Demirdjian-Petro

B.A., B.Th., M.Div.



Masking is an important defence as we learn to live with Covid

By Colleen Harding

As you know, most of the Covid restrictions we have been living with over the past two years are gradually being lifted, including indoor masking mandates. Unfortunately, the restrictions may be going away but Covid 19 is not! Indeed, the evidence is that Covid is actually on the rise again in our region. You have probably heard of more people you know who have contracted Covid in the past two weeks than you did in the last two years! The Ottawa Public Health Unit published a special statement this week where they stated "The pandemic is not over and we are currently experiencing another resurgence ". They urged that individuals who are not fully vaccinated do so as soon as possible, requested that you stay at home if you are not feeling well, and strongly recommended that we all continue to wear masks in indoor public spaces.

These are still uncertain times. Our goal here at Grace United through the pandemic has been, and continues to be, to protect the members of our church family to the best of our ability. We have dropped the mandate that you must show proof of vaccination to attend services. However, masks have become our first line of defence against the dangers of Covid, and the Official Board has decided to proceed cautiously as we move forward.

Therefore, we are REQUESTING that you continue to bring a mask to church. We ask that you wear your mask when you enter the building, while you are moving around the sanctuary and while you are visiting with one another. Once the service starts, and you are seated in your pew,

you may remove your mask if you are comfortable doing so. But if you feel safer keeping your mask on, then we encourage you to do that. Research shows that probably the time when we are in greatest danger of spreading the virus is when we are singing, so we do request that you put your mask back on while you are singing, both for your own protection and to protect others around you. And please put your mask back on when you are leaving at the end of the service.

The Province has also lifted restrictions on the number of individuals who can gather together and the requirements for social distancing. Therefore, groups that meet at the church can resume. We recommend that you wear masks, but we will leave it to the discretion of the group to set their own guidelines. Please remember to be considerate of one another.

This is a compromise and we know it will not completely remove the possibility of spreading the virus, but we hope that this approach will reduce the risks inherent in joining together on Sunday mornings. We will continue to monitor the situation as we move forward, and the Official Board will modify these requests as things evolve.

Not an open and closed case – we need help!

We are looking for 3 or 4 volunteers who are willing to take turns being responsible for unlocking the church on Sunday mornings, turning on the lights, operating the elevator during the service and then, after the service, turning out the lights, making sure the candles are out, locking the doors and pulling up the drawbridge after we are gone! If you are interested in helping, please speak to a member of Session or to Mary Haussler who has offered to organize a rotation.



Grace Community of Faith revamps marriage policy

By Paul Scott
Past Session Chair

At the Grace United Church annual congregational meeting on February 27, 2022 a new marriage policy which is more inclusive and welcoming was presented and approved.

With direction from our wider church family, Session was asked to review the current marriage policy which has been in effect since 2005. After working for a number of months, the committee presented a policy that not only provides important background, but also outlines the steps to be taken for marriages conducted at Grace United.

Although the policy appears to be totally new, the basic change is the belief "that marriage is an act of worship and is a lifelong covenant between two people and before God." The previous policy stated that marriage was between "a man and a woman". Session approved the draft policy in September 2020 and asked the Official Board to present it at the next Congregational Meeting. Due to the Covid pandemic there was no Congregational Meeting held in 2021 and so the new policy was presented on Sunday, February 27, 2022.

The introduction to our marriage policy is as follows:

This policy applies equally to all members, adherents, and non-members of Grace United Church.

Our Core Beliefs:

At Grace United Church:

We see each and every person as a unique, loved creature of God. We see God as faithful, loving, compassionate and just.

We are called to embody and model this in our own relationships with each other.

At Grace United Church:

We believe that God intends loving relationships to be faithful, responsible, just, healing and sustaining for all.

We believe that such relationships require preparation and nurturing.

We believe that relationships grounded in inclusivity, openness, respect, and equity, will be caring and loving.

At Grace United Church:

We believe that marriage is an act of worship and is a lifelong covenant between two people and before God.

We believe that when one person turns to another and promises to love them, there is an opportunity to feel and participate in the Divine Mystery and Presence. Wherever there are those gathered in the name of true love, God is there also.

We believe that marriage is a union in which two people can find their richest fulfillment of life, body, mind, and spirit.

At Grace United Church:

We celebrate marriage as both a civil ceremony and a religious rite.

We celebrate marriage in the context of a Christian community of faith that is broad, diverse, and affirming.

We celebrate the marriages of those who have been previously divorced, annulled, or widowed. We celebrate the marriages of those who have children, have no children, or have children from previous relationships.

We celebrate the marriages of those who regularly attend worship and those who do not. We celebrate the marriages of inter-faith and multi-faith couples

We celebrate the marriages of couples of all sexual orientations, gender identities and races.

The remainder of the Marriage Policy outlines the details of how marriages shall be conducted at Grace United.

The full text of this Marriage Policy and Wedding Application is available at the church office and will be on the Grace United Church, Gananoque, website.

And you asked the questions....

By Paul Scott

There were many things that changed over the past two years during Covid 19 and a lot of the changes had to do with how we handled things at Grace United when we were able to worship in person. Many of the worship details were assumed by the Re-opening Committee of Session because their members had to be there each Sunday to check proof of vax etc. So, it was very easy for them to also do the attendance head count, as an example.



Now that we starting to get back to “normal”, we are finding duties that need to be re-assigned as per pre-Covid. Session and the other church committees are working on this and continue to look for volunteers to step forward to help out.

Over the past weeks, as we gather together, folks have had questions about what is going on. Their questions were brought to Session and here is our best effort at providing answers. If you have questions from time to time, don't be shy. Members of Session, Stewards and other church committees will do their best to provide timely answers.

1. Why are the names of those in hospital no longer in the Church Bulletin?

Because of Canada's Privacy legislation, the names of those in hospital or on the prayer list are a matter of privacy. Further, with Grace United going to online worship, the bulletin is also online. Session is very aware of the issues with people being hacked or harassed on social media. We rely on you to provide Rev. Takouhi or the church office with the names of those who are sick, in hospital etc. Contact and follow-up will be made by Rev. Takouhi and/or the Sharing and Caring Team from Session. If you do not see someone at worship time, please do pick up the phone and give them a call. Just to know how they are doing and not to ask why they were not in church.

2. Why aren't the numbers of those attending, printed in the bulletin?

During Covid, when we were able to worship in person, the numbers were minimal, and Session did not require the Re-opening committee to report any numbers to the church office. Now however; Session has asked the ushers to take on this responsibility and forward the number attending worship to the office administrator each week.

3. Why aren't things that are going on in church in the bulletin?

As "normal" returns to our church and groups begin to meet, they are reminded to forward notices and information to Laurie Cadue, office administrator so they can be printed in the bulletin. The church email is grace.gan@outlook.com and the phone # is 613-382-2161.

4. Why does the M and S Your Generosity Matters happen every week?

Session felt that when it came to our Mission and Service giving, we could do better and that this may happen if our community of faith knew more about the United Church of Canada's Mission and Service projects around the world. We were fortunate that David Charles agreed to help bring that message to us each week. Has it made a difference?

In 2020 our total for the year to Mission and Service was \$8,189. In 2021, this past year the M and S total giving from YOU increased to \$14,723. That's an increase of 80%! Clearly, folks support worthy causes. As Rev. Takouhi reminded Session – We are called to be the church – in our community, in our country and in the world. Working together, we can make a difference. By the way, our local giving did not go down as a result of this M and S increase. As a community of faith, we are so fortunate to have this kind of support.

5. Why aren't the names of the church board members printed in the bulletin?

The Omicron variant of Covid 19 reached its peak in January/February so the annual congregational meeting was postponed until February 27 when the report of the nominating committee was approved. At their March meetings (most occur in the fourth week of the month) the church boards elected their chairs, vice-chairs and secretaries, so a bulletin insert with the names of the 2022 board members will happen very soon.

6. Why aren't monthly financial updates in the bulletin?

Working through the pandemic and the fact that the church was closed much of the time our services went online which means that the church's financial position is "out there" in the public domain. When the pandemic started, Session decided to produce a newsletter, Grace's Chatter, and in each quarterly newsletter our treasurer Vicki Leakey has provided a financial update. So the members receive the financials as frequently as does the Official Board. A weekly Offering report started to appear once again in the March 27 Bulletin and as the Stewards provide these figures to the church office they will be printed in the bulletins.

Membership can sooth the soul

By Rev. Takouhi



Why bother to become a Full Member at a Community of Faith?

There are many things in life that make us wonder. So, imagine how many more questions people have about Spirituality, Religion, and being part of a Community of Faith.

By no means does a minister have all the answers, but sometimes a minister can offer explanations to help us find our way.

Today, I invite you to think how your home address is essential to your everyday life; and how it is the place that you connect with your immediate family, and also how friends and extended family know to connect with you there.

First, your home address is where you live. It's where you hang your hat, put your head on a pillow, and go to sleep at night in safety. Your home is where you take time to rest, rejuvenate and restore your tired body and mind. Of course, there are many other things we can list here, but you get the picture. Similarly, being a full member of a Community of Faith is to know where you belong. This is not about an exclusive membership, where we are offered the front of the line benefits – NO!

Of course, we all belong to God, we are all called Beloved by the Creator. However, to officially be a Full Member of a church community is to know the address of your Spiritual Home; and go to the front of the line to offer your gifts to the world and make a difference.

A Community of Faith is that safe space/community that you belong to, and it is the place where your soul rests, rejuvenates, and restores itself. Moreover, as mentioned before, it is the place where you offer your God-given gifts and talents and make this world a better place. It is a place where respectful relationships grow in a safe environment.

Beloved, at Grace United Church we welcome all who want to officially become Full Members of this small Community of Faith and live with us through the Perfect Love of God. As I always say, we are all imperfect human beings attempting to live through the Perfect Love of God.

The process to become a Full Member at Grace United is simple, but a sacred invitation. About four times a year, we officially welcome Full Members during our Worship Celebration. Those who decide to join this small but loving community should connect with Rev. Takouhi by e-mail,

revtakouhi@terrautopia.ca or confidential direct tel.: 613-777-0880.





Giving is up over \$3,000, but we still depend on Trustees dollars

By Vicki Leakey

Welcome to Spring 2022

We are off to a good start for the first two months in still very challenging times. Our general offerings and limited fundraising opportunities has provided an increase over the prior year, Mission and Service also see an increase over the prior year. Total revenue before transfer of trustee funds was \$14,611 compared to 11,611 in 2021, we also transferred \$20,000 from trustees to assist with cash flow. Total expenses were \$47,810 compared to \$31,781 of the prior year, but note that we had one time costs for the audio visual equipment of \$10,604 this year.

As we work towards keeping a safe place of worship, many are looking at how we can proceed with various fundraising events in the future to help offset necessary operating costs and eliminate increasing withdrawals from trustee funds. There will be many opportunities in the future to help with planning and working at events that bring the community of the church together as well as providing additional operating funds.

This church family demonstrates an ability to provide financial support where they can and this next year as we work to find our way back to some normality, your continued financial support will be key to enabling us to fund our operations as well as fund local needs as they arise and where the church is approached to assist.

A reminder that the Stewards are encouraging the church family to use Fundscrip that allow for gift cards to be purchased with the church getting a percent of the total purchase as a fundraiser. We will be available for conversation to help explain how this program works and provides funds for church operations. We can assist getting family members set up to join the program. Personally, I do on-line banking and I set them up as one of my payees like hydro, Cogeco etc. and I can place an order and pay the amount owing as a bill payment, quite easy and the cards are then mailed to me directly.

We look forward to slowly moving forward with social events that allow for more community sharing within our church building, Covid 19 is not over, and we support each of you as you find your way of feeling safe in the next few months ahead.

As your treasurer, I am very proud of what our congregation has accomplished and thank all of you for your gifts of time and finance to keep our church strong in this community.

News from Maintenance Committee

By Brian Brooks

Our church assets are showing signs of age. The Maintenance committee has been exploring solutions and has found the things are getting rather expensive to replace.

Boiler and hot water heater – \$18,700

Pine St. door – estimate \$6,000

Boiler situation – We have contracted with GLAD Plumbing and Heating to replace the old boiler and the old hot water tank. The existing system was put in at the time of reconstruction after the fire in 1978 and is on its last legs. It is making very loud noises which require a GLAD tech to come to the church and “bleed” the system. It is feared one day it will just stop working altogether. GLAD is stock piling the needed parts and will remove the old equipment and install the new system as soon as weather permits.

Pine Street door – Our main church door on Pine St. is not so easy to repair. We need to replace the existing opening mechanism and that is proving difficult to find replacement parts, due to the age of the equipment. We have a couple of contractors trying to find what we need. It is hoped that once the right equipment is found we can go ahead. Additionally, we are hoping to install remote palm buttons on the inside and outside of the door to make it more user friendly.



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We are truly blessed with a pipe organ in Grace United Church

By Paul Harding

Some minor repairs have begun on the pipe organ in Grace United Church, and this seems like a good time to share a brief history of the instrument.

The repairs involve patching or replacing fabric portions of the organ, some of which are over 70 years old.

In 1952, under the direction of Dr. Carleton Mabee and Organist H.W. Hawke, a modest pipe organ was installed in Grace United, built by Wm. F. Legge & Son of Burford, Ontario. This included additions to the already-existing pipe organ and a new console. Some of you may remember how the front of the church I looked prior to the fire of 1979.



Grace United Church c. 1975

In August of 1979, fire of an unknown origin started in the basement of the church in the early morning hours and quickly spread through the largely wooden structure and out through the walls and roof. By mid-morning, Grace United Church was a pile of ashes and rubble where the once stately stone structure had stood for 108 years.



The fire of August 1979

Photo © the J. W. King Collection

In 1980, as part of the rebuilding following the fire, Frederick Knapton and Sons, of Glenburnie, Ontario, were contracted to rebuild an instrument they had purchased from Christ Church Cathedral (Anglican), Montreal, into a 3-manual pipe organ, using large portions of the Montreal instrument, but with a new console. Below is the proposal from Fred Knapton to build an organ in Grace United Church. The price is remarkably low!

Frederick Wm. Knapton & Sons

Pipe Organ Builders

FAIRMOUNT WORKS
Glenburnie, Ontario K0H 1S0

Telephone:
(613) 544-1529

Organ Committee
Grace United Church,
GANANOQUE,
Ontario

March 11, 1980

Dear Committee Members,

We hope that the attached proposals will be of interest to you. Great care has been taken to ensure the best possible instrument, not only fully capable of liturgical accompaniment, but also having the resources to support a varied musical program. An instrument such as this would cost approximately \$185,000.00 if totally new. The pipework alone lists at \$78,578.06. The present availability of an exceedingly fine instrument being removed to make room for total re-modeling of a prominent Cathedral, has enabled us to offer the organ outlined for the amount quoted.

OBJECTIVE: To build a three manual and pedal organ to fit within the confines of an agreed organ chamber, new stop knob - stop key detached console, new manual pipe chests, structure, wind system and Swell expression chamber. All pipework to be from used stock depending upon the purchase of an available instrument now on the market.

QUOTATION: To achieve the objective in a craftsmanlike manner, delivered, installed inclusive of all packing, insurance and freight. . . . \$77,425.00

(SEVENTY-SEVEN THOUSAND, FOUR HUNDRED & TWENTY-FIVE CANADIAN DOLLARS)



Grace United Church c. 2012

As the pipework in Montreal was not designed for display (the visible pipes of our organ, lost in the fire, were all false), it was decided that the front of our church would not feature our new pipe organ but, rather, have a more ecclesiastical theme, with the organ concealed behind an acoustically transparent screen. All of the pipes are located behind the screen on the North wall of the Sanctuary (shown with red outline). This chamber is 40 feet wide by 50 feet high, by 12 feet deep. The pipes for the Swell (upper keyboard) are situated across the entire width of this space.

This chamber is enclosed by shutters which may be opened or closed by a pedal at the console to affect the volume. There are 964 pipes in this chamber and it is the largest division of the organ. The Great (middle keyboard) pipes are located above the Swell chamber on the left side and total 671 in number. The Positiv (lower keyboard) pipes, of which there are 549, are above the Swell on the right side.



The pipes inside an organ chamber

The pipes for the Pedal organ occupy the space to the right (east) of the Swell and Positiv. There are 304 pedal pipes, bringing the total for the entire organ to 2,488 in 48 ranks (sets).

The action of our pipe organ is described as *electro-pneumatic*; that is, the keys activate switches, which in turn activate magnets, which in turn enable pouches of air to allow air to blow through the pipes. The three-manual and pedal console, built new in 1980, is connected to the pipework by thousands of tiny wires.

By repurposing the pipe organ from Christ Church Cathedral, we were able to contract with the Knapton family to build our new organ for less than \$78,000. In order to have a 'showcase' instrument near their workshop, they added many portions of our organ at no cost to us.

If purchased new, in 2022, the approximate value of the pipe organ in Grace United Church is \$1.25 million dollars.



The Console of our pipe organ

Pipe organs can last hundreds and even thousands of years. The oldest parts of our pipe organ were built in England in 1859 and are just as serviceable today as then. We applaud the foresight of our Trustees who, in the 1970s, ensured that we had adequate insurance to allow us not only to rebuild our beautiful church, but to be able to actually replace our pipe organ with an even finer instrument. We look forward to many, many years of service.

If you would like to know more about our organ, or see it up close, ask our Director of Music. There are *few things* Paul Harding enjoys more than telling people the history of our church and our pipe organ.

Grace United Church 2022 Board & Group Members

*(Note: The Official Board includes all members of Session, Board of Stewards, and a representative from other groups. The representatives are denoted with a *, a complete list is available from the church office)*

Official Board:

Chair: Brian Brooks
Vice Chair: Bruce Wilson
Secretary: Diane Nuttall

Session

Chair: Barb Jenkins
Vice Chair: Marg Worth
Clerk: Susan Barwell
Member: Tammy Fergusson
Member: Raymond Shea
Member: Cheryl O'Leary
Member: Diane Kirkby
Member: Colleen Harding
Member: Julie Price

Trustees

Chair: Angus Fergusson *
Secretary: Marg Worth
Treasurer: Vicki Leakey
Member: Marilyn Belbin
Member: Brian Brooks
Member: Joan MacKinnon
Member: Shirley Clark

Maintenance Committee

Murray Roantree *
Brian Brooks
Angus Fergusson

Board of Stewards

Chair: Denise Wood
Vice Chair:
Clerk: Diane Nuttall
Treasurer: Vicki Leakey
Member: Eileen Thomson
Member: Linda Brooks
Member: Christina Gordon
Member: Shirley Clark

Memorial Fund Committee

Chair: Carolyn Scott *
Trustee Rep: Vicki Leakey

Ministry & Personnel Committee

Chair: Dave Charles *
Member: Nancy Abrams
Member: Elaine Davidson
Member: Pam Shea

Region 12 Representative

Dave Charles *
Denise Wood *

Other Committees and Groups

Grace Church Handbook

Dave Charles
Nancy Abrams
Marg Worth

United Church Women

Chair: Linda Brooks *
Vice Chair: Denise Wood
Secretary: Diane Nuttall
Treasurer: Marg Worth

Audio Video Team

Dave Charles
Paul Harding
Christina Kaya
Angus Fergusson

Worship Team

Rev. Takouhi
Paul Harding
Tammy Fergusson
Colleen Harding
Donna Norman

Sharing & Caring Team

Rev. Takouhi
Colleen Harding
Joan Shaw
Doreen Wilson
Barb Jenkins
Tammy Fergusson
Denise Wood

Celebrations

We wish to extend our blessings to all those who are celebrating an Anniversary, Birthday or other special occasion in the coming months.

Happy Birthday – Graham, Lucille, Connie, Connor, Helen, Dorothy, Dave, John, MacKensie, Maryfil, Nicole, Vera, Max, Angus, Gloria, Betty, Christina, Reta, Shirley, Alyn, Tammy, Mel, Tom, Doreen, Nancy, Eileen, Laurie, Anne, Richard and Marg.

Happy Anniversary to Diane & Jim, Paul & Carolyn, Brian & Cecile, Steve & Connie, Paul & Colleen, Laurie & Gerard, Doug & Betty and Brian & Susan.



New Members

On April 10th two new members were welcomed to the Grace United Church family, Chuck Galway and Veronica Shepherd. Please introduce yourself and welcome them with open arms.

Condolences

Our Grace Church family extend our sincere condolences to all those who have lost loved ones recently. The following members and adherents of Grace United entered into eternal rest, Jack Turley, Thelma Modler, Richard Fergusson, Audrey Jackson and Gerald Huffman. We pray that their friends and family are finding comfort in their memories.

"For though I am absent in body, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good order and the firmness of your faith in Christ" – Colossians 2:5

Contributors this month: Rev. Takouhi, Vicki Leaky, Brian Brooks, Colleen Harding, Paul Harding, Paul Scott and Laurie Cadue

NEXT DEADLINE – JUNE 10, 2022

Have you got a favourite summer recipe you would like to share in our next newsletter or an interesting story? We want to hear from you! Contact Paul Scott or Laurie.

Contacts:

Minister: Rev. Takouhi Demirdijian-Petro - Direct line: 613-777-0880

You can learn more about Rev. Takouhi on her website www.RevTakouhi.ca

Church Contact:

Laurie Cadue 613-382-2161 grace.gan@outlook.com

Church Boards:

Official Board –

Brian Brooks 613-382-2385 brooksb525@gmail.com

Session

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Board of Stewards:

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