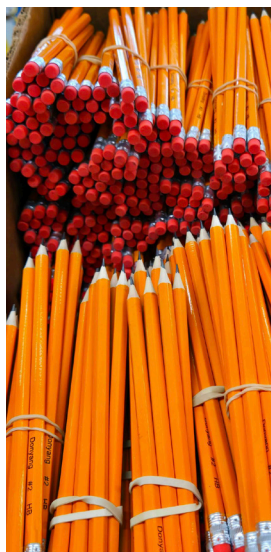


THE BRIDGE

SEPT '25 | OCT '25 | NOV '25
CARLISLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



BACKPACKS, BUSES, AND BLESSINGS

Every August, a remarkable tradition unfolds in Carlisle, one that blends generosity, partnership, and community spirit. The Carlisle-4Kids Back-to-School event has become a lifeline for a thousand children in our area, providing them with the supplies they need to start the school year with confidence, dignity, and joy. This year, CUMC once again joined hearts and hands with community partners to make it happen.

Carlisle4Kids began with a simple but profound vision: Every child should begin the school year prepared and equipped to learn. The initiative grew out of conversations between local nonprofits, faith communities, and civic organizations who recognized that many families in our community face real challenges in affording the long list of required school supplies.

Over time, the event has expanded into a county-wide collaboration that now provides backpacks, notebooks, pencils, crayons, and other essential items to students in the Carlisle Area and South Middleton School Districts and surrounding areas. The goal is not only to meet a practical need but to send a

powerful message that our community cares deeply about its children.

The first step toward the big day happens well before the school bell rings. In the weeks leading up to the event, volunteers and donors gather at the Fill the Bus drive hosted at Walmart. Shoppers are invited to purchase extra school supplies and "fill the bus" parked outside the store. It's such a fun day where parents and children buy a few items to donate. Many parents have been heard explaining to their kids why giving matters. Once the donations are sorted, all eyes turn to the Carlisle Expo Center, where the main event takes place. The Expo becomes a vibrant hub of activity, rows of tables lined with backpacks, stations for choosing supplies, and volunteers ready to guide families through the process.

For the children, it's an exciting and affirming experience. They get to "shop" for their supplies, making choices about colors and styles, and walking away with a backpack that feels truly their own. For parents and caregivers, it's a relief to know their children
(continued on Page 4)

CELEBRATING CAPITAL CAMPAIGN MILESTONE!

At the end of July, our church family celebrated a huge milestone in our third and final Capital Campaign. After initially spending \$15M to purchase our land, permit, design, build and furnish our building, and complete the rest of our campus, we celebrated because our remaining debt is now less than \$1M! At the end of July, our debt was down to \$988,000, and by the time we are reading this, it will be even lower.

Predictions show that few churches continue strong as they enter a ninth year of Capital Campaigns, yet CUMC continues to rise above the averages as we sustain a robust pace of giving. This church is follow-

ing God's leading, and we constantly see ways God is blessing us.

In October we will enter the final year of Capital Campaign 3. Thank you to the almost 250 families or individuals who have taken part in this journey, with new folks joining in each month. We are excited to see what happens and where God guides us from here. Watch for updates as we move Forward and get closer to paying off our final debt! We can only imagine what we can do together when we are finally debt-free.

~ Jeff & Sue Barnes



Kids' MINISTRY

FALL KIDS MIN

- SEPT 7** - Preteen Color Battle
- SEPT 14** - Preteen, 5-7pm
- SEPT 21** - 1st Grade Prayer Event, 3-4pm
- Preteen, 5-7pm
- SEPT 28** - Preteen, 5-7pm
- OCT 5** - Preteen Family Picnic & Kickball Game, 5-7pm
- OCT 12** - Preteen, 5-7pm
- OCT 19** - Preteen Halloween Bash, 5-7pm
- OCT 25** - Trunk-or-Treat
- OCT 26** - Preteen, 5-7pm
- NOV 2** - Preteen, 5-7pm
- NOV 9** - Preteen, 5-7pm
- NOV 14** - Preteen Late-Nighter, 5-10:30pm
- NOV 16** - Preteen, 5-7pm
- NOV 23** - Preteen, 5-7pm
- NOV 30** - No Preteen

If you were anywhere near the church the week of Vacation Bible School in June you definitely heard some joyful noise. From singing to children laughing there was a lot of excitement happening at True North VBS

Over the past few years one of my favorite things has become how much our children truly love vacation bible school. In June we spent a week in the Alaskan wilderness learning about trusting Jesus at True North VBS. The children learned bible stories all week in exciting ways through acting them out or creating different parts of the story. They learned about John preparing the way for Jesus, how Jesus taught about God's love, how a Roman soldier learned to trust Jesus, how Jesus died and came back to life and about the Holy Spirit coming. They had so much fun playing games all week outside and inside. They did different experiments in our Imagination station that looked like an igloo. They also learned fun ways to remember their memory verses at our sticky scripture station. They also learned how to look up their memory verse in their own gospel of Matthew that they got to take home at the end of the week. There were fun moments of learning new songs, seeing Mad Scientist Pastor Jake and Pastor Quinton do experiments, eating snacks, learning about our bible buddies each day and sharing God moments each day. The kids also raised \$456 for the Salvation Army to buy toiletries for those in need. It was such an awesome week

Thank you to everyone who volunteers, donated to, prayer for and financially contributed to Vacation Bible School.

Looking ahead to the fall some dates to

know in Preteen we will kick off our year with our color battle on September 7th. We will be playing games with colored powder. As we head into fall we are going to have a picnic for Preteens and their families on Oct 5th. We will gather in the pavilion for dinner and a family kick ball game. We will celebrate Halloween with our annual Halloween Bash on Oct. 19th so feel free to wear a costume. We will be heading to the Loudon's farm again this year on Oct 26th for hayrides and a bon fire and we will take time to talk about giving thanks on Nov. 23rd. On Nov 14th the Preteens will be having a late-nighter at the church from 5-10:30pm.

We have some fun family events planned for the fall. On Sept 21st we will have our prayer event for our first graders and their grownups. First graders will learn some fun ways to pray with their grown-ups and will learn the Lord's prayer. On Oct 25th we will have our Trunk or Treat at the church from 4-6pm. Join us for a fun, free evening of games, crafts, food and our trail of trunks.

TRUNK OR TREAT

Join us Sat, Oct 25, 4-6pm for a fun-filled evening with trick-or-treating, decorated trunks, food, crafts, games, a service project, line dancing, and more! Last year we welcomed 400 families - and we need your help to do it again!

Ways to help: • Decorate a trunk • Volunteer for activities • Donate individually wrapped candy (bin available in the Gathering at the end of August) Sign up on the CUMC app. Thanks for supporting Kids Ministry!

If you would be interested in helping in Kids Ministry, please talk to Christina.



ROOTED IN CHRIST, GROWING THROUGH SERVICE

This summer, I once again had the privilege of witnessing God move powerfully through our students and adult leaders during two incredible mission trips. Over the course of July, 40 students and adult leaders served in Altoona, PA and New Bern, NC, using their time, energy, and gifts to show people the love of Jesus in real and practical ways.

In Altoona, our team completed several meaningful projects. We built a deck railing for an elderly couple navigating dementia, baked and played card games with them, and brought joy through simple acts of kindness. We painted rooms in a local community center that supports food programs, autism services, and mental health care. We also

finished the soffit installation on a new porch for a grateful homeowner who reminded us how powerful it is to serve with open hands.

In New Bern, we stepped into three different phases of new home builds for families in need of safe, stable housing. Our students and leaders did everything from insulation and house wrap to electrical, HVAC, and door installation. One of the most impactful moments was finishing the final details on a home so a family could move in - what a blessing to see a completed house.

But more than the physical labor, we were constantly reminded of our theme: being rooted in Christ. Whether working under the hot sun or singing worship songs in

the van after a long day, God was shaping us from the inside out. We saw hearts soften, friendships deepen, and students grow in boldness, compassion, and faith. I continue to be blown away, not only by the work we're able to accomplish, but by the way God teaches us about His goodness, grace, and faithfulness through each project and person we meet. To everyone who prayed, gave, or supported our teams in any way: thank you. You helped make this summer's mission trips possible and life-changing. We can't wait to see where God calls us next. Spoiler alert: planning for 2026 has already started!

**With gratitude,
Erin Fleet**



GROWING TOGETHER

At CUMC, our GROW pillar is all about deepening our relationship with God – through daily devotion, scripture, prayer, and learning together in community. Like Jesus, who gathered with others around God's Word, we believe growth happens best when we share the journey.

Right now, we offer 3 adult Sunday School classes plus a wide variety of small groups for every stage of faith. Some are perfect for those just starting out; others challenge those



who've walked with Christ for many years. Wherever you are, there's a group for you.

Have you ever thought, "I wish there was a study on..." or "I'd love a class

at a different time"? This could be your chance! We're blessed with wonderful leaders, but we're always excited for fresh ideas and new groups. Leading doesn't have to be long-term – just a step of faith.

Our hope is for everyone at CUMC to find a place to grow. Interested in starting or joining a group? Reach out to me or Pastor Quinton.

Let's grow together!

~ **Sharon Edwards**
sde1960@gmail.com



(Carlisle4Kids...continued from Page 1) will start school ready to succeed, without the burden of stretching an already tight budget.

This year, our CUMC volunteers were stationed at the entrance and foyer, welcoming families, helping with registration, and offering high fives that put smiles on the kids' faces. The joy was contagious.

Carlisle4Kids is a shining example of what can happen when an entire community comes together. The United Way of Carlisle & Cumberland County plays a central role in coordinating the effort, ensuring resources are distributed where they're needed most.

Project SHARE contributes its deep connections with families and its longstanding mission to fight hunger and poverty. Our ecumenical partners, churches of many denominations, bring volunteers, prayers, and a shared commitment to love our neighbors.

And then there's the heart-

beat of CUMC, all of you and our Serve volunteers. From those who braved the summer heat at Walmart to those who spent the day at the Expo, each person offered time, energy, and compassion to bless our community's children.

Behind the scenes, the work of coordinating volunteers is no small feat. This year, we give special thanks to Kathy Charrette, whose leadership and organization made the registration and sign-up process run smoothly. Kathy's dedication ensured that every volunteer knew where to be, what to do, and how to serve with warmth and hospitality. Her attention to detail and love for people embody the very best of what it means to serve.

The success of Carlisle4Kids goes far beyond the tangible supplies given out. It's about restoring dignity, lifting burdens, and making sure that no child feels "less than" when they walk into the classroom on the first day of school. It's about showing families that they are seen, valued, and supported by a caring network of neighbors.

In the words of one parent who attended this year's event: "You have no idea how much this means to us. My kids are so excited to start school now. Thank you for making

them feel special."

As we reflect on another successful year, we are reminded that ministry happens not only within the walls of our church, but out in the heart of our community. Whether it's handing out backpacks, sharing a smile, or offering a listening ear, each act of service builds a bridge of hope. We look forward to partnering again next year, to filling the bus, filling backpacks, and filling our community with the love of Christ. Thank you CUMC; you made Carlisle4Kids possible this year. You lived out Matthew 25:40: "Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

~ **Pastor Quinton De Beer**

GIVING FROM THE HEART - AND YOUR RETIREMENT

We each have our own personal journey of giving. We should all prayerfully consider what God is asking of us to give.

A Required Minimum Distribution is the minimum amount an individual must take from the retirement accounts (IRA's, 401(k)/403(b) plans, SEP IRA's, Simple IRA's) to satisfy the federal tax rules. You must take out the

(Continued on Page 8)

HOSPITALITY IN ACTION

The Holy Spirit has been busy nudging people to visit CUMC; we averaged 38 first time guests each month so far this year. I have learned from guests that they feel welcomed, they appreciate the kindness of the CUMC family. The guests say they enjoy the music and sermons. The guests have also shared they have a difficult time finding a seat. One reason they have difficulty is that after they learn where to take their children, worship has already begun. To help with

this issue and to provide additional hospitality, we have placed reserve covers on seats throughout the worship center. These are for guests so they can easily find a place without having to walk to the front. Just like many of us, guests do not like to sit up front. There are 10 seats with reserve signs. If you find it is where you routinely sit, thank you for your understanding and flexibility.

I think the reserved seats offer the CUMC family an opportunity to identify our guests. I hope that more

regular attenders will greet them. Please remember that one or two people greeting someone sitting in the reserved seats is welcoming, a group surrounding them is weird.

Another way to help people feel welcomed is sitting in the middle of the row, not the ends. If possible, move in the middle this week or move forward a few rows. I have noticed that a few people have been doing this. Thank you.

~ **Andrea Katz**

SAMARITAN FELLOWSHIP

Holly, a single mother, came to Samaritan Fellowship with her young daughter, Kate. Her work hours had been cut, and she was behind with rent. The good news was that she had recently completed her Bachelor's Degree... and was starting a better paying job soon. After speaking with Holly, and gleaning an understanding of her situation, our volunteers at Samaritan Fellowship were able to provide financial rental assistance, allowing her to keep a roof over her head for her small family. This scenario repeats itself in some way every Saturday morning at Samaritan Fellowship. We are a non-profit, 501c, ecumenical organization which has operated in the Carlisle area since 1958. We are "open for business" every Saturday morning, from 7:45 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. (That is EVERY Saturday morning; if it happens to fall on Christmas Day or New Years Day, or Independence Day, we are here.) Our mission is to provide assistance, be it financial, a referral to another charity, or other guidance, at a time when other resources have been

tapped out.. We strive to prevent homelessness, utility shut off, vehicle repair, and help with other emergency needs. Our service area is the Carlisle School District, the South Middleton School District, and Middlesex Township. We are so fortunate to do our work at CUMC, which has always provided us with such a warm and welcoming experience!

Our clients often experience a lesser problem that can result in an escalating shortfall in family finance. A hospital stay, a cutback in job hours, a broken vehicle, a sick child staying home from school...that can put families into a downward spiral, usually with no safety net available to them.

We are a 100% volunteer group, and part of the beauty of how we operate is that we "show up" at CUMC when we are able on Saturday mornings. Sometimes the number of volunteers and the number of clients who come to us doesn't make it easy...But we start the interview process at 8:30, (our intake volunteers start at 7:45) and stay until the job gets done.... that is, all the interviews have

been handled and a solution, either with financial assistance, or referral to another agency, has been made. We sometimes joke that we seem to get a lot done for not having any employees. Our volunteers consist of several retired lawyers, some active ones, many educators (including a former school superintendent and a retired law professor), former law enforcement, a retired physician and several nurses, and others.

Here's how we operate: Our clients show up at CUMC beginning at 7:45am. There are no appointments; it is first come first serve. A one page application is completed, and our "data wizards" enter details into our computer data system, and pull any previous information we have for each client. This gives our interviewers a better picture to help serve our clients. Then our interviewers meet the client, and assess how we may be able to help them. We have a rotating "Board" which consists of our Chair, Treasurer and Secretary which help facilitate our decision making.

(continued on Page 8)

CUMC AT MY BROTHER'S TABLE



For over 13 years, CUMC has partnered with the Salvation Army's My Brother's Table to serve

monthly meals – feeding 70-90 people each time. Beyond providing food, we've built friendships with guests like Rodney, who helps gather supplies, and others who share prayer requests lifted up by our prayer team.

One special memory was preparing ribs for a dear friend after she requested them. Her joy that night stays with me, and when she later

passed, her daughter asked me to speak at her funeral – an honor that showed how deeply these meals connect us.

CUMC now also serves quarterly Saturday meals, expanding this ministry's reach. Thank you for your prayers, service, and support that make this vital work possible.

~ Ron Chipriano

DEYE MON GEN MON - WHAT'S HAPPENING IN HAITI?



The Haitian proverb "Dèyè mòn gen mòn" – beyond mountains there are mountains – captures both the beauty of Haiti's landscape and the ongoing struggles its people endure. Political unrest, gang violence, and humanitarian crises continue to weigh heavily. Yet faith remains a steady anchor.

Jesus' words in Matthew 17:20 remind us that even faith as small as a mustard seed can move mountains. While He wasn't calling us to expect miraculous mountain-lifting, His message points to the power of faith in the face of hardship. In Haiti, where Christianity is deeply rooted, this truth comes alive. Our partnership with the Mellier School is proof that faith can transform challenges into hope.

Life at Mellier School

The 2024-2025 school year began with a joyful opening ceremony, drawing the community together. Principal Fritz has worked diligently to strengthen academics, social activities, and partnerships among donors, staff, church, and families.

Throughout the year, students

6

engaged in activities that combined learning, culture, and



community: November evaluations helped teachers adapt lessons to student needs, December brought holiday celebrations and parent meetings, and January marked the exciting launch of the school canteen—improving both nutrition and learning. February's carnival-themed activities fostered social unity, and year-end programs highlighted Haitian culture.

Updates on Friends of Mellier

Caz, our interpreter, and his family continue to live in Baton Rouge under the Immigration Parole Program. They welcomed a daughter, Amelyne, in July. Though their long-term future is uncertain, their resilience and gratitude inspire us. We hope to see Caz visit in 2025.

Kassidy with Living Water Missions remains a vital bridge, keeping us connected to Mellier. She and her husband welcomed their son, Harrison, in May while staying with family in Texas. Remarkably, Kassidy had just returned from Haiti weeks before his birth. She looks forward to returning this fall.

The Haitian staff at Living Water Mis-

sions is keeping the pre-school and summer feeding programs open. This summer they were feeding two hundred kids three times a week.

Faith in Action

The Haitian mountains remind us of life's obstacles, yet also of God's enduring presence. Through faithful partnerships, the Mellier School continues to grow – and lives are being shaped beyond the mountains.

Please prayerfully consider how you can support CUMC's ministry in Haiti as we serve in partnership with Richwood UMC beside the people in Mellier and Living Water Missions.

Bondye Beni Nou! (God Bless You)

~ Rich Charette

WHERE DO WE SEE GOD?

In Missions, we often ask, "Where did we see God?" Recently, several of us were honored to attend the engagement celebration of a young Afghan couple, filled with music, dancing, food, and joy.

We saw God in love and thankfulness—being welcomed to a table of honor, reconnecting with women and children once supported by CUMC, seeing teachers embraced by their students, sharing hugs with community partners, and watching new families celebrate traditions from home.

God calls us to build community and welcome the stranger. In doing so, we are welcomed into theirs – a glimpse of God's plan.



CUMC SPY VOLUNTEERS - MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Last year, SPY, Supportive Partnerships for Youth, became one of CUMC's SERVE outreaches for children in our community. This summer SPY has been busy making a difference in kids' lives. For seven weeks from late June to early August, SPY provided education and enrichment activities to 186 students in grades K to 5th grade from Carlisle and Newville. These students were identified at their schools by teachers and counselors as being at risk of falling behind academically during the summer who could benefit from a summer program. In addition, 12 older students that have been through the SPY program helped out as Counselors in Training. Local churches acted as hosts of the summer program: First United Church of Christ, St. John's Episcopal Church, First Evangelical Lutheran Church and First United Presbyterian Church in Newville.

As we know, part of CUMC's mission is to share what we have with others and serve those in need as we strive to Live Like Jesus. CUMC played two important roles: making our kitchen available for food preparation which prepared all the food going to the campers and staff, and volunteer opportunities being filled by church members/friends.

Sue Baxter, a CUMC member and SPY Board member, was the SPY Volunteer Coordinator for the summer program. A total of

102 volunteers chalked up 818 hours of volunteer time. CUMC had twenty people who served as volunteers in various capacities this summer. Those volunteers included Elissa Henderson, Wayne Henderson, Lincoln Sands, Stephanie Cornwall, Jackie Ford, Joanne Reynolds, Beverly Miller, Barb McMullin, Darlene Sheaffer, Joanne Monoski, Janet Overholtzer, Jean Yufer, Cindy Kunst, Art Kunst, Barb Birmingham, Chris Benson, Georgeann Laughman, Gary Weaver, Cindy Weaver and Sue Baxter. CUMC volunteers spent many volunteer hours in the church kitchen preparing food for the kids. Leftovers were sent home to feed other members of their families. CUMC volunteers also delivered the prepared food to the different churches that hosted SPY Camp, as well as served lunches to the campers.

While helping to serve lunch at St. John's where the 3rd and 4th graders had camp, it was very heartwarming to see the kids being led in songs, chants, and activities that focused on empathy, kindness, respect, perseverance, and teamwork. SPY Camp is an enriching, impactful and fun way for the kids to spend part of their summer.

Thanks to all the CUMC volunteers for making a difference in the lives of kids in our community! Beside is a note of gratitude from Jeanna Som, SPY Executive Director

~ Art Kunst

Dear Friends at CUMC,

On behalf of everyone at SPY, I want to express heartfelt appreciation for the extraordinary compassion and service you shared with us this summer!

Over the course of seven weeks, nearly 6,000 meals for children in our community were prepared in your kitchen - meals that kept children nourished during the summer months. From cooking to delivering and serving meals at each of our locations, you devoted countless hours of volunteer service that made this tremendous effort possible.

Your impressive support truly embodies what it means to be a community partner, meeting real needs with open hearts and willing hands. Because of you, children who might have gone without had consistent, nutritious meals all summer long, and their families had one less worry during those busy months.

Please know how deeply we value your partnership and the lasting difference you have made in the lives of SPY children and families!

With Sincere Appreciation,
Jeanna Som,
SPY Executive Director

carlislepaumc.org

A FREEDOM WORTH LIVING

This summer I celebrated my first 4th of July in the U.S. – fireworks in the sky, communities gathering, families sharing food and laughter. Beyond the celebration, I was reminded that freedom is both a gift and a calling.

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(Giving...continued from Page 4)

required amount as a taxable distribution from your retirement account, which is taxed as income. This is because this money was invested pre tax. Income tax was not paid on the contribution when it was made, so it is being paid on the distribution.

The RMD ages have shifted over the past few years. If you are born between the ages of 1951 and 1959, your RMD age is 73. If you are born 1960 or later, you will begin RMD's at 75. There are some special circumstances where you may be able to delay if you are still working, but these will vary and should be discussed with a tax professional. Required minimum distributions are, as the name states, required, and a penalty will be assessed for each missed distribution.

Your RMD will be based on your account balance at the end of the previous year and your life expectancy based on an IRS table. This amount will be given to you by the plan sponsor or your financial advisor, but for those accounts you are managing yourself, there are also online tables to calculate this information. <https://www.irs.gov/retirement-plans/plan-participant-employee/required-minimum-distribution-worksheets>

One tool that can be utilized for

Scripture offers us a deeper vision of freedom. In Galatians 5:13, Paul writes, "You were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become servants of

.....
minimizing tax, is to use the RMD as a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD). Unlike the new age bands discussed above for the RMD, you are still able to make a QCD from the account as early as age 70 ½. The QCD would allow you to give to Carlisle United Methodist Church (or other qualified 501(c)(3) organization) directly from your retirement account without paying tax on the distribution. This could be your ordinary giving or used to finish out Capital Campaign 3. Our goal with CC3 ending is to retire the debt on this amazing building, which will allow us to focus on our mission of inviting all to become disciples of Jesus Christ serving the greater Carlisle community and beyond. This is an incredibly helpful tool for tax planning, as any of the distributions from your account (up to the RMD amount) that go to the church will not be included in your taxable income for the year. The funds must transfer directly from your investment account to the charitable organization, to avoid taxation. Discuss this distribution method with your plan sponsor or financial advisor. If you have additional questions, feel free to ask Stephanie Baity, LC Give chair, sbaity1022@gmail.com.

~ **Stephanie Baity**

one another." True freedom is not simply independence, but an invitation to love more deeply and serve more fully.

As the church, we live out this freedom each time someone offers a listening ear, mentors a child, prepares a meal, or prays for a neighbor. Through WORSHIP, GROW, CONNECT, and SERVE, we embody the freedom Christ has given us.

Freedom is not static – it calls for a response. Not just once a year, but every day. May we use our freedom not only to enjoy it, but to steward it well, reflecting God's love, grace, and hope in all we do.

~ **Pastor Quinton De Beer**

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(Samaritan...continued from Page 5)

We receive no government funding. Our donations are from individuals and churches, and a few smaller grants. Because of this, we feel a deep responsibility to our donors to use contributions efficiently. This is why Samaritan Fellowship has a great network of other local agencies to both receive and send referrals when appropriate.

For us volunteers, it's a great way to start the weekend. We are often reminded how fortunate we are to serve, and reflect on the way Christ chooses to reveal Himself through His children.

~ **Wayne Henderson**



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