



# CUIC Notes

## Pentecost



### WELCOME TO “CUIC NOTES”

Welcome to the latest online newsletter for Churches Uniting in Christ. We hope that this will continue to be a useful resource for sharing with you, the energy of CUIC, what is happening through the Coordinating Council, the CUIC Task Forces, and the Director’s Office and to help you share with each other how you are living out the vision and commitments of CUIC in your communities.

Our plan is to publish 3 times per year, timed to seasons and special days on our church calendars-- Advent, Pentecost and World Communion Sunday. Please help us develop “CUIC NOTES” into a resource that will bring the friends of CUIC closer together by:

- ❖ Sending reports of initiatives and activities in which churches in your area are engaged. Our e-mail, fax and address may be found at the end of this newsletter.
- ❖ Pass this newsletter on through your denominational and local networks either via e-mail or printed documents.
- ❖ Tell us what you would like to hear about in future newsletters. Unsolicited contributions will be gratefully received and included in future newsletters as appropriate.
- ❖ If you received this letter by “snail mail” and you have an e-mail address we hope you will write us at [cuic@ucc.org](mailto:cuic@ucc.org) and let us know what it is so that we can save time, money and a tree or two.

### ...Racial Justice Consultation Sparks Enthusiasm



Bishop Steven Charleston

Bishop Steven Charleston, President and Dean of the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Massachusetts, was the keynote speaker for the consultation “Eradicating Racism: Liberating Tomorrow’s Children” sponsored by the CUIC Racial Justice Task Force. Meeting in Chicago at the Lutheran Church Center on March 29, the consultation was convened to explore how the churches of CUIC could take positive steps in living out our commitment to work toward the eradication of racism. Over 80 church leaders, academics, seminary students, and grass roots activists came together to discuss how Churches Uniting in Christ can work for racial justice. All nine CUIC communions were represented.

Bishop Charleston reminded participants that, in spite of some of the statements we hear that the churches have other burning priorities now, or that funding is not

available, or that “we already have a person in charge of that,” anti-racism work is still urgently needed in and by the churches. He suggested four basic principles for the consultation’s consideration:

- 1) Racial justice is the core ministry of the church;
- 2) Racial justice must be an intentional, visible and consistent component of the church’s mission;
- 3) Racial justice training must be an ongoing requirement for staff and leaders of churches; and



90 participants from 12 denominations meet in plenary session at the ELCA headquarters

4) Funding for racial justice work must be a priority. He concluded his message with these words: "Receive the authority of God, so that when you tell the mountain of racism to move, it will move."

The rest of the day the consultation was divided into 7 work groups which reflect the strategic commitments that the member communions made at the Memphis Inaugural event: The Theological Case Against Racism, Social Ethics, Worship as Witness, Christian Education, Institutional Racism, Advocacy, The Churches' Response to New Immigrant Groups.

***The Racial Justice Task Force met on May 13-14 and reviewed the reports from each of the consultation work groups. See the task force report later in this newsletter for a summary of the work plan the task force has developed for its work based on the consultation reports.***

We are very grateful for the hosting that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, a CUIIC Partner in Mission and Dialogue, provided for this important consultation.



Dr. Rita Nakashima Brock, Rev. Lydia Veliko and Bishop Melvin Talbert participate in a small group.



Participants celebrate success of day in closing worship led by Edna Duffy Murphy



Rev. Jessica Vazquez gives the report for the Institutional Racism Group

### **...Rev. C. Dana Krutz Elected President of CUIIC**

At its March, 2004, meeting in Louisville, Kentucky, the Coordinating Council elected the Rev. Dan Krutz as the second President of Churches Uniting in Christ. The following is an interview with the Rev. Krutz by the Rev. Dr. Bertrice Y. Wood, CUIIC Director on March 29<sup>th</sup> following the Racial Justice Consultation.

*Congratulations on your recent election and thank you for your willingness to share some of the thoughts you might have as you start your service as President of Churches Uniting in Christ. Would you tell us a little about who you are and what you do?*

Rev. Krutz: I'm a native Arkansan, but went to college in Dallas where I graduated from SMU. I received a degree from what is now Berkeley at Yale in 1971 and later did additional work at Virginia Theological Seminary. My wife and I moved from Dallas, where I was ordained an Episcopal Priest, to Louisiana in 1974. I served parishes around Louisiana, and both our sons were born and grew up in the Bayou state.



Rev. Krutz at recent Racial Justice Consultation

In 1992 I took the position as the Executive Director of the Louisiana Interchurch Conference. The offices are in Baton Rouge and we currently have both Roman Catholic and Protestant members. We don't do direct services as such although we do have one project whereby we assist farmers in the region to retain their property. A lot of the farmers are having foreclosure proceedings against them and we have a program to aid them in their struggle. Most of the Louisiana Interchurch Conference work is done through its standing commissions. My job is to consult with and be supportive of the chairpersons and the commissions.

Faith and Order. This is a big part of our work in Louisiana because of the Roman Catholic presence and the study documents that are coming out of the various dialogues. This commission meets frequently and reports to the board

semi-annually, one time of which is at the Annual Assembly held in the spring. We try to have someone speak on a faith and order theme during these meetings. We often alternate with life and work social justice issues. Lately we have been studying some of the draft work of Churches Uniting In Christ and trying to keep up with that.

Anti-racism Education. Training in this area has been a primary focus of a couple of board meetings. The three historic African American Methodist churches and two historic African American Baptist churches are all members of the Interchurch Conference. A big part of my work is serving as host. Ecumenists provide a forum for engagement in dialogue and conversation in an atmosphere of hospitality so that people can relax and talk informally with one another in ecumenical settings.

Commission on Criminal Justice. The Louisiana Interchurch Conference was formed in 1970. Early in its life it took on the task of seeking reform in the Criminal Justice system in Louisiana. During the time of my predecessor, Jimmy Stovall, reform and advocacy efforts in the legislature brought out some of the things that were going on at the Angola Prison, a notorious state institution. Lots of churches, not just those in the Interchurch Conference, joined together to raise money to build a chapel on the prison grounds. We are now trying to build chapels at all the other prisons. We have raised over 2 million dollars and built four or five chapels. There has also been a special emphasis on juvenile justice issues. A reform act was passed in the previous legislature and it is being implemented now.

Stewardship of the Environment. This commission has focused on ground water policies in Louisiana with good success. The time and climate are right. Coastal restoration using federal funds is taking place.

In many ways, I see myself partly as an ambassador to the church-at-large in Louisiana.

*Rev. Wood: What has your involvement been with the Consultation on Church Union and now Churches Uniting in Christ?*

Rev. Krutz: The first time I can remember was helping to organize a COCU Eucharist in a small town north of New Orleans at an integrated and interdenominational setting. The United Methodist Church, the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, the Episcopal Church and the Presbyterian Church invited their congregations to worship together. It was well received. It was the first occasion of racially mixed worship in that community. When I arrived there in 1974, there were still "white only" signs in the town.

When I moved to Shreveport in 1981, I was the rector of an Episcopal church there and became the ecumenical officer for the Episcopal Diocese of Western Louisiana. We organized a day when we looked at the COCU texts—the theological as well as covenantal texts. About 30 people from member churches participated. Those kinds of events fed my interest even more. I attended the state council as an ecumenical officer and then applied for the director position in 1992. Since then I have been involved in full time ecumenism. I was on the Episcopal Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations. At some point I attended one of the Executive Committee meetings of COCU as a proxy. It was the meeting that led to the 1999 Plenary.

I recall that Joan Brown Campbell said, "There is only one ecumenical movement". All ecumenism is interrelated. Local, regional, national and world wide are one movement. I try to always communicate this sense of interrelatedness, to articulate the vision of what the ecumenical mission is. What does it mean to be the one church and seek the oneness of Jesus Christ?

*Rev. Wood: What, in your mind, is the vision for CUIC? What should we be about and what are the possibilities?*

Rev. Krutz: I think that one of the tasks we have is to define for ourselves what the goal of CUIC is. There might be different opinions about what the shape of unity will take. I remember just after the inaugural ceremonies at the first Coordinating Council meeting being challenged in my goal. I was thinking full communion was the goal and another representative said full communion may not be exactly what we are after. There may be other ways to describe what we are after. We need to be clearer about what that vision is.

*Rev. Wood: How do you see us getting to that clarity of vision?*

Rev. Krutz: We will need to spend some time together in theological conversations. We may need resource persons to help. What are the possible models of Christian unity? What would they look like and which one seems most appropriate? How do we perceive the goal of visible unity?

Full communion means full engagement with one another not just a means in which there is interchangeability of ministries and recognition of churches. I think the major weakness in the full communion agreements we already have is the reception process.

Maybe you gradually grow into it, particularly the implementation at the local level. We need a more systematic approach to implementation. People think that once the agreement is made it's done when in fact it's just began. We may work against cultural and economic behaviors which prevent us from really working together. The individualism that is so much a part of our society mitigates against sharing. It's as if we are supposed to do it by ourselves and it's better if we do it by ourselves. We see the takeover model a lot and that is certainly not what we are about.

Maybe what we need a consultation on local and regional ecumenism much the same way we have had one for anti-racism.

Much of the life of CUIC is in the task forces and their work. We need to get the word out about Churches Uniting in Christ, and I see that as one of my tasks. I am and want to be an ambassador for CUIC and to get the word out about what one person described as “one of the best kept secrets among the churches today.” I have a lot of energy about this. Ecumenism is my life in many ways and not just my profession. I am deeply committed to this.

*Rev. Wood: Any thoughts about today's Racial Justice Consultation?*

Rev. Krutz: I thought there was a lot of energy and a sense of cooperation and willingness to work together. There was a real good spirit here today. It was good to have a balance of people of color. It makes me think about the fact that racism is not just black and white anymore. Our society is not just black and white any more and we need to be aware of that. We don't want to lose site of the black/white issue and how historically that is a sin – a blight on the church as well as society. But we also have these other questions.

One of the tension points—unfinished pieces of work—certainly in CUIC is the matter of inclusiveness as it relates to sexual orientation. The churches are going to be challenged by this.

We will work on cultivating stronger friendships among all the member communions.

We need opportunities to share in worship more than there are now. We are missing a lot of opportunities to share the Eucharist together.

The Racial Justice Consultation is the strongest piece of work, as a single event, that has been done since the inaugural event.

Certainly the Ministry Task Force has worked very hard. I am very grateful for their work and I am looking forward to finding a way beyond our current dilemma. We were beginning to see possibilities at the last bi-lateral Episcopal/Presbyterian consultation.

*Rev. Wood: Any final comments?*

Rev. Krutz: I think that CUIC is at a place in its life that multi-lateral conversation will provide a benefit. It's time for the denominations to invest more. We have gone through a lot of birth pangs and growing in our relationship to one another. It is time to do more serious study and interaction with each other as denominations. I think that that will happen. Many times people have seen the multi-lateral conversations as not very practical and a poor investment of denominational energies. But I believe that is not the case anymore. I believe that the goals that we are seeking are more attainable. It's not just a dream anymore.

*Rev. Wood: Thank you, Dan. I am looking forward to working with you under your leadership as President.*

## **...NEWS FROM COMMUNIONS AND REGIONS**

**--The United Methodist Church welcomes a new ecumenical officer.** The Rev. Dr. Larry Pickens has been elected as the General Secretary of the General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns. He begins his service on July 1. Welcome Larry!

**-The Indiana-Kentucky Regional Office of Church World Service,** promoted its CROP WALKS for the hungry to CUIC churches with a reminder from the CUIC “Marks” that participation in CUIC means that the churches express their relationship with one another through a number of visible marks, including the engagement in mission that “embodies God’s justice, peace, and love.” You might consider inviting Churches Uniting in Christ congregations in your area to participate together in a CROP WALK or other such events.

**-The Memphis area CUIC group** continues with its celebrations and joint mission endeavors. In January, there was a CUIC weekend with Saturday seminars on the ecumenical movement and its implications for local congregations. The Rev. Dr. Paul A. Crow, Jr., former President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Council on Christian Unity, was the preacher at a Sunday afternoon ecumenical worship service. Two new coordinators, Ray and Julia Allen, have been appointed as former coordinator, Carla Meistermann, takes up extensive local church pastoral responsibilities.

**- Living Together in a New Way in Missouri** – The quality of the Missouri Churches Uniting in Christ Eucharistic Celebration held January 11 at the Missouri United Methodist Church in Columbia was foreordained. Upon receiving an email notice of the service, Dr. Gary Kremer, Professor of History at William Woods University, Fulton, Missouri, responded with an important note on the historical significance of the date of the service: “January 11, 1865, was the day a special Missouri convention meeting in St. Louis officially ended slavery in Missouri”. Rev. Dr. John Bennett, Director of the

Missouri School of Religion Center for Rural Ministry, Jefferson City, Missouri, and Convener of the Missouri CUIC Coordinating Council, commented in his welcoming remarks: "Our council haphazardly picked this date unaware of its historical significance to the state but we were providentially led to do so!" The event attracted 250 worshipers from across the state, with each of the CUIC member denominations represented. The bishops and executives of each denomination processed with ecumenical pageantry into the cathedral-like sanctuary and later served as concelebrants in the Eucharist with Rev. Dr. Bertrice Wood, CUIC Director, Cleveland, Ohio, as the Presider. Rev. Dr. Emanuel Cleaver, pastor of St. James United Methodist Church, Kansas City, Missouri, and former mayor of that city, preached a powerful sermon, resonating with the themes of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s preaching, in which Cleaver challenged the churches to acknowledge and confess the tragic history of racism reminding the audience that "even now the church remains the most segregated institution in the nation." With prophetic passion he called for the churches to "make a 'U-turn' and live out the meaning of the reconciling Gospel."

A dinner following the service, hosted by Bishop Ann Sherer, Missouri Conference of the United Methodist Church, was attended by 32 clergy and lay leaders of Missouri's CUIC churches who were intentionally convened to begin work on a CUIC public policy strategy at the suggestion of CME Bishop Paul A. Sweet, Sr. In addition to taking on the public policy initiative, the MO CUIC Coordinating Council is working on its third annual Missouri CUIC Visioning Retreat to be held November 8 and 9, 2004, at the Rickman Conference Center, The Disciples retreat center, in Jefferson City. The theme of this retreat will be: "Living Together in a New Way: The Search for Peace in the Middle East. (Excerpted from an article written by John Bennett appearing in *Ecumenical News*, January 23, 2004.)

**-Boone, Iowa had a CUIC Inaugural Worship Service** with Holy Communion Sunday afternoon, June 8, 2003. Boone is a community of 13,000 population with little racial diversity (about 99% white). We have the following congregations representing communions participating in CUIC: Central Christian Church, First United Methodist Church, Marion Street United Methodist Church, First Presbyterian Church, and Grace Episcopal Church. Clergy and lay representatives from all five congregations led the service and the pastors of the First United Methodist Church and the First Presbyterian Church were the celebrants for Holy Communion. A choir was composed of volunteers from several of the congregations. The sermon was delivered by the Rev. Sarah Schnucker Beck, Executive Director of Ecumenical Ministries of Iowa (offices in Des Moines). We are in the process of forming a local CUIC Council with one clergy person and one lay person from each of the congregations. (Contributed by Ron Franklin, pastor of Central Christian Church, Boone, Iowa)

**-The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America** is holding a multicultural gathering "in praise, in song, and in dance" which will take place July 9-11, 2004 in Orlando, Florida. The theme is "Lift Every Voice." For further information call 1-800-638-3522 or visit [www.elca.org/cmm/events.html](http://www.elca.org/cmm/events.html).

## **...NEWS FROM THE COORDINATING COUNCIL AND TASK FORCES**

### **COORDINATING COUNCIL**

The Coordinating Council met in early March at St. Paul's College in Washington, D.C. It elected its new officers:

President:	The Rev. C. Dana Krutz (Episcopal Church USA)
Secretary:	Mr. Abraham Wright (International Council of Community Churches)
Treasurer:	Elder James N. Tse (Presbyterian Church USA)

In addition to tending to its ongoing business of receiving the President's and Director's reports, financial updates, and reports from the task forces, the Council engaged in a day-long strategic planning process led by the Rev. Gradye Parsons who guides planning for the Presbyterian Church USA. Among the goals and strategies that the Council identified for itself and staff are the following: Work toward having all nine CUIC member communions at the Coordinating Council table; systematically check on the "Marks of Churches Uniting in Christ", including the commitment that the member churches will regularly consult with each other through Heads of Communion and others; development of a sound financial development plan, including shared resources; the development of ways for member communions to speak together on issues of racism and regular consultation and work in eradicating racism; more visibility for Churches Uniting in Christ; multiplication of local expressions of CUIC in worship, mission, and witness; and coordinating of the work of the 3 task forces in a wholistic way.

The Coordinating Council will next meet October 1-2, 2004 in Memphis, Tennessee, hosted by the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church. Bishop Ronald Cunningham is the CME representative to the Coordinating Council.

### **LOCAL AND REGIONAL ECUMENISM TASK FORCE**

The Local and Regional Ecumenism Task Force met in March at the Eden Theological Seminary near St. Louis, Missouri. President David Greenhaw had invited us to attend as a follow up to preliminary conversations about

collaboration between CUIC and seminaries related to our churches. We had an opportunity to meet with students and talk about CUIC with students in a polity class. Students expressed interest in studying polity which is inclusive of ecumenical education, that they might understand better the polity of other churches as well as their own. At Eden all first year students learn about ecumenism in a course taught by Dr. Michael Kinnamon. We also met with members of the Missouri CUIC Task Force which has been holding annual statewide worship services and retreats, and has an ongoing focus on racial justice and other public policy issues.

One of the highlights of our visit to Eden Seminary was its presentation to COCU/CUIC of the Eden Theological Seminary medal in recognition of our contribution to the ecumenical movement.

We also discussed the status of the task force's planned pilot projects among CUIC churches in Denver and Los Angeles. Task Force member Rev. Jim Ryan, Executive of the Colorado Council of Churches, reported that he would convene a meeting in May of leaders of several Denver churches to consider issues or tasks that they might undertake ecumenically. One of the task force members is working on starting the process in Los Angeles.

The task force will next meet September 15-17 at the Louisville (KY) Presbyterian Theological Seminary.

The Rev. Kathy Reeves, (Presbyterian Church [USA]), is Task Force convener.

### MINISTRY TASK FORCE

The Ministry Task Force will meet next in early June. It will be reviewing an updated draft of the document on "Mutual Recognition and Mutual Reconciliation of Ministries." Our hope is that the task force will soon be ready to share a draft for conversation across the churches, beginning with the Heads of Communion. The task force will review a proposed educational process intended to foster broad discussion and feedback from denominational and ecumenical focus groups. Eventually, that feedback will serve in the development of a statement and process for the recognition and reconciliation of ministries which we hope the member communions will be able to approve and implement. The Rev. Dr. Rollin Russell will be serving as contract staff to coordinate the educational/feedback process. We'll keep you informed as plans proceed.

The Rev. Dr. Harrison Bonner, (African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church), is convener of the Ministry Task Force.

### RACIAL JUSTICE TASK FORCE

Following the March 29 consultation on "Eradicating Racism: Liberating Tomorrow's Children" (See earlier article), the Racial Justice Task Force met in mid-May to review the reports from the working groups of the consultation. The task force looked for themes throughout the reports. It has developed a work plan which includes the following foci and endeavors:

- Local Level: training people to do advocacy at the local level, making available legislative alerts on racial justice work, making a list of "best practices" in racial justice work that are making a difference, sharing lists of denominational and other ecumenical organizations engaged in anti-racism work, exploring specialized anti-racism training for youth and young adults through camps and youth events;
- Immigration: developing an annual "immigration day" for training, preaching, and advocacy;
- Worship: sharing "best practices" for multi-racial, multi-cultural worship, promoting a Racial Justice Sunday in all churches (including partnering congregations and denominations and sharing hymns and sermon notes);
- Education: developing and/or sharing racial justice parenting resources; CUIC online "Diversity Notes";
- Seminary Education: researching and sharing "best practices", exploring a pilot project with a seminary;
- Working with communion leadership.

If you have any input on any of these suggestions, we would appreciate hearing from you. Thanks.

The Rev. Jayne Oasin, (Episcopal Church), is convener of this task force.

### **...A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR OF CHURCHES UNITING IN CHRIST**

As a teenager, I came to understand that Pentecost Sunday was the time to celebrate the "birthday of the Church." It was the Sunday for Confirmation in my local congregation.

Over the years, I have come to understand and appreciate Pentecost as not only the moment for birthday of the Church, but as also one of the most extraordinary events in the history of Christian unity. I am struck by the way in which the Holy Spirit enabled the diverse community gathered in Jerusalem that day to understand each other, to get past their differences of language.

Consider that when they gathered they came for a common festival but had no way of really communicating with each other. We think of the rush of the wind by which we were filled with the Holy Spirit. But, let us not forget the words

that followed: "Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native tongue of each. Amazed and astonished, they asked, 'Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language?'" (Acts 2: 5-7)

I am convinced that we in Churches Uniting in Christ live under a Pentecostal mandate and vision. Imagine what our churches could do together for the sake of God's mission in the world if we reclaimed the Pentecostal experience and spirit. Image who we could become as a community of faith if we allowed ourselves to trust that the Holy Spirit has already enabled us to understand each other as though we were all speaking in the language of each other. That new reality that we have inherited from that first Pentecost day invites us to listen to each other knowing that it is possible to understand each other if we but stop and allow ourselves to be "amazed and astonished" at the diversity, yet the unity of the Church.

We have committed ourselves to journey together on a path of reconciliation of our ministries and for racial justice. I like to think of reconciliation as the experience of exchange places in the heart with the other; it is a fundamental change in how we view and hear each other. During this Pentecost season may we know that mighty rush of the wind that can transform our differences into cherished and reconciled unity with diversity.

### **...PRACTICAL RESOURCES**

-The CUIC **website** has had a "face-lift" and plans are in the works for expanding its use and keeping it current. Watch for extensive coverage from the Racial Justice Consultation. Many thanks to our web host at Eden Theological Seminary and to Lois Long who continues to maintain our site for us- [www.cuicinfo.org](http://www.cuicinfo.org).

-The CUIC **Inaugural Worship Service** from January, 2002 in Memphis has been edited for ongoing use. It is currently available on the web site. It is offered as a guide and may be edited to reflect the style and need of each situation. ***In return, the CUIC office is collecting any resources that have been or could be used in this liturgy. Please send them on to us as they are available.***

-A CUIC **brochure** is available through the Ecumenical Office of several of the denominations. A template of the brochure is available for the use of regional ecumenical groups. The design contains basic information about Churches Uniting in Christ with an open panel for information about specific groups and their programs. For additional information contact the CUIC office or Lydia Veliko at [velikol@ucc.org](mailto:velikol@ucc.org). An expanded version of the brochure, published by the Presbyterian Church (USA), titled "Churches Uniting in Christ: A Resource Booklet for CUiC Congregations" is available through denominational resource services or from Presbyterian Distribution Service (#7428002007)

-The United Methodist Church has produced a **video** about Churches Uniting in Christ. It is about 10 minutes in length and cost \$5.00 plus postage. Call Olga Diaz at the General Council on Christian Unity and Ecumenical Concerns – 212-749-3553. E-mail – [odiaz@gccuic-umc.org](mailto:odiaz@gccuic-umc.org).

### **...DATES TO NOTE:**

#### **-ECUMENICAL JOURNEYS ABROAD:**

-May 3-13, 2005 Europe: An ecumenical pilgrimage to London/Canterbury, Geneva, Pisa, Assisi, Rome, with May 13-16 Athens option, plus 3-island cruise and worship at the Areopagus with the WCC Commission on Worship Mission and Evangelism. WCC Theme: "Come Holy Spirit, Heal and Reconcile."

-February 9-20, 2006 Argentina and Brazil: A scenic tour of Argentina and Brazil, including Iguasso Falls and the towering Christ statue in Rio de Janeiro. Option: Part of the WCC Ninth Assembly in Porto Alegre, Brazil, February 18-19. WCC theme: "God in Your Grace, Transform the World."

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESERVATIONS, CONTACT THE REV. JOHN GEORGE HUBER, TELEPHONE 858-459-8855 or [johngeorgehuber@aol.com](mailto:johngeorgehuber@aol.com).



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