

The Pine Tree

The Congregational Church of San Mateo

United Church of Christ

225 Tilton Avenue • San Mateo, California 94401

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✧ LENT 2015 ✧

LENT 5: Sunday, March 22 • *The Table of Forgiveness* • Nicole Lamarche. ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING Offering.

✧ HOLY WEEK ✧

March 29 • PALM SUNDAY • *Save Us* • Jorge Perry Bautista

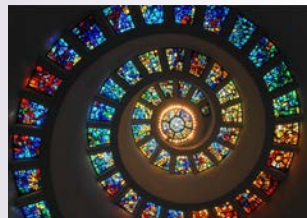
April 2 • HOLY THURSDAY SERVICE • 7 pm, Kloss Hall

April 3 • GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE • 7pm, College Heights UCC

April 5 • EASTER CELEBRATION: *The Resurrection Table*!

RESURRECTION IS COMING!

Don't miss our wonderful Easter Celebration—come be part of a resurrected community!



8:00am early service, come hear some resurrection stories

10:30am Easter Celebration—*The Resurrection Table*!

✧ SUNDAYS IN THE EASTER SEASON ✧

April 12 Jerri and Marge's commissioning

April 19 A Resurrected Earth

April 26 Earth Day service created by our seminarian Joliene Wade

May 3 Spring Concert: *The Wisdom of Old Turtle*

May 10 Mother Earth

May 17 Confirmation Sunday

May 25 Pentecost

May 31 Guest preacher: New PSR President David Vasquez-Levy

Comings, Goings, and "Stayings"

I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge that there have been a lot of comings and goings in the past few years. Music directors, ministers, interns... Lots of life transitions with Betsy retiring, Kathleen returning to Australia to care for her parents, then Brandon honoring his passion to teach, and Jerri following her heart's desire to work with Global Ministries, and now Laura leaving to explore other avenues of ministries. We have had a great deal of change over the past few years, all for different reasons.

And we have new people like Carl, and Jorge, and Janet returning to serve us. Each one enriching us with his/her presence.

But there are a lot of "stayings" too. Our music staff—Julie, Lynnelle and Angela—have all been with us over 20 years. Pearly, our church administrator has been with CCSM 15 years. Trini, our sexton, for 15 years. Zoe, our church secretary, wins the prize for 24 years of CCSM service. I am just a newbie in my eighth year but have made a long-term commitment as your senior minister.

And that's just the staff. The lay leadership of the church has a multitude of long-time members who continue to serve faithfully year after year, decade after decade. The real stability of the church is always the congregation itself. And this congregation has been strong throughout all the innumerable changes of the past 150 years.

So though goodbyes are never easy, and while we bid farewell to two ministerial staff in the next few weeks, part of community life is the comings and goings, and the stayings. May we embrace them all with grace and gratitude.

Penny

Children, Youth and Families



Godly Play Stories

April 5 Join us for our Easter Festival in Kloss Hall!

April 12 Story of the Crosses

April 19 Parable of the Leaven

April 26 Parable of Parables

Parents: please pick your child up from their Godly Play classrooms at 11:45am, which will give them time to hear the story, engage in their chosen art response, and have time for prayer and the closing feast. We ask that you do not interrupt the classroom if you need to pick your child up early, but to please touch base with the doorkeeper when you arrive and let them invite your child to join you in the hallway. *Thank you for supporting Godly Play!*

Summer Camps are HERE!!!

This summer we will be hosting TWO camps here at CCSM:

Community Camp (for our neighbors), **July 13-17**. This camp will be offered to the children in our neighborhood and our Mid High and Senior High youth will be involved in leadership and service that week.

Peace Village (for CCSM, Peninsula Temple Beth El and Muslim Garden School friends), **July 27-31**. This camp is for campers in grades 3-8 (entering Fall of 2015) and for Senior High youth leaders.

The children and youth of CCSM are invited to join us again this summer for our wonderful **NCNC Summer Camping Program** up at Camp Cazadero. For more information on the camp itself, please go to: facebook.com/CampCazaderoUCC

To register your child, please go to the conference website at: ncnccucc.org/outdoor-ministries/

- **Annual Gathering Youth Program, June 11-14**, at Sonoma State University (grades 7 to 12)
- **Adult Spiritual Retreat, June 12-14** at Cazadero (age 18 and up)
- **Cazadero You & Me Camp, July 10-12** (grades K to 3 with adult companion)
- **Cazadero Sr. High Camp, July 12-18**, (grades 9 to 12)
- **Cazadero Counselor in Training Camp, July 19-25**, (grade 12 or HS graduate)
- **Cazadero Junior Camp, July 19-25** (grades 3 to 6)

- **Cazadero Jr. High Camp, July 26-Aug 1**, (grades 6 to 9)



*You and Me Camp
Caz, July 2014*

Palm Sunday Parade!

All children, youth and their families are invited to join us on Sunday, March 29 for our Palm Sunday Parade! Meet Pastor Laura on the loggia at **10:15am** to receive your palm and place in line. We will process together into the sanctuary to truly celebrate this special day!



Costa Rica Mission Team 2015

THANK YOU CCSM!



The Senior High Youth Costa Rica Mission Team says "THANK YOU CCSM!" for your support at our dinner/auction on March 15. We thank you for buying raffle tickets and our fair trade Costa Rican coffee (which you can continue to order from Beneficio Coffee online!) and our chocolates! Costa Rica here we come!

With gratitude,

*Joe Dunbar, Jeremy Chang-Yoo, Matt Kawakami,
Savannah Zvarik, Kayla Hanna, Naomi
Schroeter, Patrick Kane and Fred Tileston*

Laura Barnes to Leave

On Sunday March 15th, Laura made this announcement to the congregation:

Dear CCSM Members and Friends:

It is with a very heavy heart and mixed emotions that I am writing to notify you all that effective May 15, 2015 I will be officially resigning my position as your Minister for Children, Youth and Families. My last Sunday with you will be Palm Sunday, March 29th. It has become apparent to me over these past few months that God is calling me to explore other avenues of ministry within the United Church of Christ and I must be faithful to that call.

It has been such a privilege to serve you these past two and a half years. There are so many amazing memories that will go with me as I continue on my journey. We have done so much together—from introducing Godly Play to our children to involving our youth in the life of our conference and the greater community in very meaningful ways. I have so enjoyed our mission trips, our times together at camp and serving all of you in worship, education, pastoral care and love.

I will hold all of you in my prayers as you move into a time of transition, which can be both exciting and challenging.

May God continue to bless the Congregational Church of San Mateo.

With love,

Laura



Penny will be gone on a study trip to Israel from March 19-29.

She will post on our Facebook page so you can follow her travels. On **Sunday, April 26, 9:30-10:15am**, come and hear Penny's thoughts and reactions to her time in Israel.



Children, Youth and Family Ministry Update

This past week we received Laura Barnes' resignation as our Minister of Children, Youth and Families (CYF). Her last Sunday with us will be March 29th. While change is often challenging, we want to pause and thank Laura for her two and one-half years with us and wish her the best in her calling to explore new areas of ministry.

We also want to recognize the many achievements made on behalf of our children and youth under her leadership and guidance of our dedicated and competent CYF Ministry team. Laura leaves a lasting impression in many ways—infusing youth in governance of the church, elevating the importance of "sacred space" for our children, introducing and implementing Godly Play, strengthening CCSM's connection with the larger UCC community and making meaningful progress in introducing programs for our youth such as OWL.

Laura's commitment to intentional programming has been inspiring. The CYF Ministry will continue to strive for implementation of enriching programs she's introduced, improvements to our facilities for all constituents and in honoring our children, youth and families internally and within the broader community. The Ministry looks forward to working with an acting minister to be sure the regular demands of our programs are met meanwhile participating in building long-term solutions that will support a vibrant children, youth and family community.

Please join us on Palm Sunday, March 29th, for a special farewell reception for Laura after the service. There will be treats and fun for the kids and an opportunity for everyone to bid Laura farewell. Please contact Lisa Shirley (Co-Chair of CYF Ministry) at lisashirley37@gmail.com or 650.515.7634 for opportunities to thank Laura for her service, say goodbye and/or wish her well.

While our CCSM world is evolving we completely trust that our time together will have a lasting and meaningful impact on generations of kids we serve and that Laura's gifts will continue to elevate children and youth programming wherever her next chapter takes her.

I hope you will join us for the special farewell reception being planned on **Sunday, March 29th**. The adjoining "Children, Youth and Family Ministry Update" highlights the many positive contributions Laura has made to CCSM over the past two and one-half years. We have been blessed by her presence and will continue to honor her dedication to our children through a continued commitment to innovative and intentional CYF programming.

The Board of Ministries (BOM), at their regularly scheduled meeting on Sunday, March 15th, assigned a task force to identify and propose an "acting minister" to fill Laura's vacancy. With Jerri Handy's pending assignment at Las Memorias in Tijuana, I am pleased to report that Janet Bower has agreed to return as "acting coordinator of Congregational Care."

While this is a time of transition, we are in good hands with Penny, Janet, Jorge, Carl, dedicated administrative staff and competent lay leadership in all areas of ministry. Our future is bright!

Jim Berthelsen
CCSM Moderator

Jim Berthelsen, Moderator
Penny Nixon, Senior Minister

New Initiatives Fund established at CCSM

We are so thrilled to announce that due to an extremely generous donor, CCSM has established a New Initiatives Fund. The fund will be used to promote new initiatives beyond the scope of the general budget. The initiatives will be directly related to our three priorities. Some programs may annually take a higher priority, but the goal is to share the funding among initiatives over a longer time frame.

Projects may be of any duration, from a few days to a few years. Project funds may be used for various types of initiatives such as: Enhanced Programming, New Programs, Support Personnel to initiate new programs, Enhanced Technology, Matching Funding, Neighborhood and Community Outreach, Developing Systems of Care for members, Systems of Communication for member outreach and connection, Facilities Improvement, New Educational Initiatives.

In addition, CCSM members may apply for a grant from the fund of up to \$2,000 if they have a special church project that they need help with. Contact Penny for more information.

In this time of change in the life of our church,

The Pastoral Relations Council (PRC) is available to the congregation for listening. The members are Veril Phillips (chair), Linda Skromme, Austin Mader-Clark, Mike Mullery and Barb Karlin.

Rally Time!

Wheels are rolling again. Rally your neighbors and friends to check their garages for unused bicycles. The Wheels Team will polish up donated bikes, repair any damage, test drive them for safety—and then deliver them to homeless shelters, day worker centers and other agencies, so that those who need transportation can have some wheels of their own.

The first bicycle drive was so successful a donor gave \$5,000 for new helmets and bike locks! What a generous way to help our less fortunate neighbors (and recycle). Youth and adult bicycles can be delivered to the Kloss Hall stage (our "donation altar") any time the church is open.



2015 CCSM Rummage Sale



CCSM Barn Dancers

Swing your partner! Some boot-stomping fun was had at last month's Barn Dance Pick A Party.



RECORD-BREAKING SALE: RECYCLING AT ITS BEST!

More donations than ever, more volunteers than ever, more shoppers than ever, lower prices than ever, more delightful stories from our neighbors, new identifying tee-shirts designed by Kay Harris, and more income than ever—**over \$11,000!** All those funds go to CCSM social justice projects.

MSJ



Ministry of Service & Justice

Actually we expected to earn less money than ever, because before the sale we "shopped" from the wish lists of five agencies that CCSM supports. Over 35 boxes, lots of toys, and more than 60 chairs were delivered to our needy neighbors for free. In fact, items requested by Mother of Peace filled twelve big boxes and are sailing to Africa right now.

MSJ tee-shirts say, "God has no hands but your hands." The sale required many, many hands working hard. In addition, the rummage sale proved that CCSM embodies, "God has no heart but your heart." Our neighbors witnessed our gracious hospitality, generous spirit and commitment to justice face-to-face—thanks to all of you donors, sorters, sellers and cleaner-uppers.

Carl Pantle Appointed New CCSM Director of Music

The congregation and choir rejoiced on Sunday, March 1, when they learned that Carl Pantle, Interim Music Director, has accepted CCSM's offer to become our new Director of Music. His choir directing, solos, and piano accompaniments enrich our weekly worship experiences, and we look forward to his continued musical contributions to CCSM in the future!



Carl is an alumnus of the prestigious Merola Program at the San Francisco Opera and currently serves as Music Director of the Oakland East Bay Gay Men's Chorus, as well as principle accompanist for the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus.



NEW MEMBERS FROM LAST FALL • On November 23, 2014 we welcomed 14 new members to our church family. As their names were not included in our previous Pine Tree, we are including them now. Welcome!

Back row, L to R: Jerri Handy, Gene Chelberg, David Meissner, George Snode, Dakota and Rick Kenney, Andrew Ellis, Martha Clements, Trisha Green, Janelle Bradford

Front row, L to R: Michael Weise and Michelle Rhee with kids, Laura Van Hagen, Darshna Patel-Ellis and daughter.

Not pictured: Lorna Groundwater

HOME AND HOPE HOSTING

April 19-26 and June 14-21

The homeless families from Home and Hope will be living at CCSM the week of April 19-26 and again from June 14-21. For those of you who are new the program, we at CCSM provide housing (as in sleeping in tents in Kloss Hall), meals (breakfast, lunch and a hot dinner) every day, evening hosts (to help with anything the families might need) and overnight hosts (who make sure all is well during the night and get the families up in the morning, lay out breakfast and lunch fixings). We also need to set up the tents and cots on Sunday afternoon on April 19 and June 14, and then take the tents and cots down on Sunday mornings April 26 and June 21.

As you can see, there is a great need for volunteers to help with this program. If you can help prepare an evening meal, help with set up or take down, act as hosts or spend the night, please contact Donna Lindsay at 650-345-8397 or releduc@sbcglobal.net. It takes about 35 people to make the week work in a fair manner so a volunteer only has to do one task. For those who want to sign up on line, watch the bulletin for the link, otherwise see or contact Donna Lindsay.

**"IS NOT THIS THE
KIND OF WORSHIP I
SEEK;
TO SHARE YOUR
FOOD WITH THE
HUNGRY, TO PROVIDE
THE POOR WITH
SHELTER."**

ISAIAH 58

Organization Design Task Force Update

Doug Henton, Chair

The Organization Design Task Force (ODTF), comprised of Doug Henton, Jeanne Back, Barb Karlin, Alison Schwandt and Gary White, has been busy compiling results and recommendations from the surveys and interviews conducted over the past couple of months.

Over 250 church members and friends participated in the online survey, which is a remarkable response rate for a congregation our size. Thank you for your interest, input and comments that will help us achieve our visioning goals.

As our conclusions and recommendations come into focus over the next month, we'll be sharing them with the congregation through information forums and additional information being placed on our web site. Look for more details in April!

AN ASSORTMENT OF OPPORTUNITIES AT CCSM

Music and Art Guild

Friday, March 20 • Noon • Buckham Room

Come meet our featured speaker, Carl Pantle, our newly appointed Minister of Music and Arts. Bring a sandwich; dessert and beverages are provided. Guests are welcome either for lunch or at 1:00 for the program. Guests, please call Zelta Adams at 341-1644.



well-acclaimed primer *Living Beautifully With Uncertainty and Change*. This winter and spring we are delving into the latest book by Deepak Chopra, *The Future of God*.

We will also enjoy a field trip on **March 22** to a local Buddhist temple or other house of worship (after CCSM church service), instead of our usual discussion format. We meet twice a month, on Sundays from 12noon-1:30pm in the 2nd floor library room. Dates for winter/spring are: 3/22, 4/12, 4/26, 5/10, 5/24, 6/7 (we'll recess for the summer). Please join us! Contact Rebecca at (650) 483-0756 or rebrue@earthlink.net for more information.

Pick-A-Plant

Palm Sunday, March 29

Stop by the loggia on your way to coffee hour on Palm Sunday, and pick up an Easter plant to take to one of our members who can't make it to church regularly. We'll supply the name and address, and we ask members of the congregation to re-connect with someone you haven't seen in awhile, or better yet, meet someone new. What a wonderful way to spread some Easter cheer!



No Homework

Tonight!

Friday, April 10, 6-9 pm FREE!
Kloss Hall

6:00-7:30: Auction, Music, Appetizers

7:30-9:00: Desserts, Program, & Auction Winners!



Homework Central is celebrating its 17th year of providing Homework assistance and family support to neighborhood children.

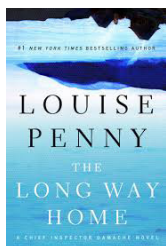
The event is free of charge. Our auction has many enticing choices plus two raffle items: a Go Pro Camera and iPad Air 2. But the heart of the evening will be hearing inspiring words from Homework Central students, interns, principals and supporters. Please come and share in the joyful evening.

RSVP to Richard Geimer, Executive Director, rgeimer@smhwc.org, or speak to Betsy Woodward, 650-571-9359

First Tuesday Book Group

Tuesday, April 7, 7:30-9:00pm • Fireplace Room

Our Tuesday Book Group has chosen several books for the coming months so here is your chance to read ahead! We always have a stimulating discussion and often have varying opinions of the books. New readers are always welcome to join us. Our choice for April is the bestseller, *The Long Way Home* by Louise Penny. It's a murder mystery set in Quebec with Chief Inspector Armand Gamache—a lively thriller with a little French sprinkled here and there. Check out the library shelves: they have several in Foster City. Please email Susan Stoehr at s_stoehr@hotmail.com to be added to our email list and/or Betsy Woodward at betsdce@comcast.net if you have questions.



Here are the books for the coming months:

May: *Never Let Me Go*, Kazuo Ishiguro

June: *The Women: A Novel*, T.C. Boyle

Sept: *Against the Tide*, Elizabeth Camden

Oct: *Ghost Ship*, Clive Cussler

Nov: *The Rosie Project*, Graeme C. Simsion

Sisters in Spirit (SIS)

We are an open-minded group of CCSM sisters (and friends) exploring cutting edge ideas about spirituality through the writings of contemporary religious, philosophical and inspirational thinkers of our time. We had a great time last fall reading Pema Chodron's



Embodied Practice: Spiritual Exploration through Yoga

Mondays, April 20 & 27, May 4 & 11
7:00pm • Buckham Room

Led by Yoga teacher and CCSM member Kate Joyce, this spiritual practice will be a gentle class for people with wide ranging physical abilities/limitations to participate fully. The class will also incorporate the week's scripture reading(s) and sermon topic into the practice. Come join Kate on Mondays!



Wise & Wonderful Seniors (WiWos)

Ever wonder what Wise and Wonderful Seniors do on the second Wednesday and fourth Thursday of each month? Here is the lineup for 2015.

WiWos are great fun and you don't need to be Wise or Wonderful to join the group... you don't even need identify as a senior. Wherever you are on your life's journey, you are welcome to join us for any or all of these activities.

2nd Wednesdays in the Buckham Room, 10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

4/8 Out with the Old. A time for sharing with Pastor Jerri and send-off to Mexico.

5/13 In with the New. A time to regroup and look ahead.

4th Thursdays: Please sign up in church office to make reservations. This helps us to create carpools—more fellowship, less cars. Each 4th Thursday we gather at CCSM at 10:30 a.m., and leave at 10:45.

3/26 Barbara's Fish Trap, north of Half Moon Bay on Hwy 1.

4/23 Paul's Diner, 4000 S El Camino Real; free parking on north side of building.

PIPE ORGAN CONCERT

**An event from the Congregational Church
of San Mateo Music Ministry:**

**Charles-Marie Widor's Symphonie VI in G minor
Sunday, March 29, 4-5 pm, CCSM**

You are cordially invited to attend a pipe organ concert featuring **Thomas Lohmuller**, CCSM's Organ Scholar. This one-hour program will feature Charles Marie Widor's Symphonie VI in G minor, as well as works by J. S. Bach, Dietrich Buxtehude, David N. Johnson, and Angela Kraft Cross. A light reception will follow the program.

Suggested donation: \$15 adults, \$10 students and seniors, free for children 12 and under.



JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF GRATITUDE...

90+ and homebound birthdays coming up: **Martha Imai** turns 100 on April 23! **Bob Kraft's** birthday is March 27, and **Thelma Kromhout's** is April 15. We celebrate your lives and wish God's blessings for you.

Our Global Ministries personnel **Sarah and Victor Makari** (Israel/Palestine); **Mark Behle** (Lesotho); **Nicole Betteridge** (Thailand), **Kate Moyer and Doug Smith** (Mexico). Let's partner with them in prayer as they serve alongside our mission partners around the globe.

Prayers of joy for **John Michael Medina**, born February 7 to **Rebecca and John Medina**. He is named after his daddy and his maternal grandpa. **Genel Morgan** is the proud grandma. (This makes three!)

PRAYERS OF COMFORT

Joyce Everson, mother of **Kristi Everson** and grandmother of **Joy Lynn**, passed away on March 13, 2015. She was surrounded by her two daughters and grandchildren. A memorial service will be held in Wisconsin, which is home to Joyce. Please pray for the family in this time of loss.

Louise Coughlin, mother of **Phyllis Lunardi**, passed away March 8, 2015 after a long illness. Please pray for the family in this time of grief.

PRAYERS OF HEALING AND SUPPORT...

Cari Parker took a bad fall on the tennis court and broke bones in her hand. This is a difficult situation for anyone but especially for a musician. Please keep Cari in your prayers.

Deborah Brodhag, daughter of **Tom Banks**, was diagnosed with adenocarcinoma in her lung. Tom is requesting prayers for her and the family.

Janice Kennedy, cousin of **Margaret and Gordon Smith**, has had a recurrence of cancer. She is undergoing treatment with experimental chemotherapy. Please pray for Janice and all who love and care for her.

Gail Evans is experiencing painful back issues.

Chuck Charlton has entered hospice care. Please pray for him and those who love and care for him as they prepare to transition. Chuck is a man with a passion for making education possible as a solid step in building a brighter future for young people.

Michelle (friend of **Gail Evans**), **Chris Williams** (family member of **Jeanne Back**), and others remain in our prayers as they walk their unique journeys with cancer.

THE PASTORAL STAFF WANTS TO THANK YOU FOR SHARING YOUR JOYS AND CONCERNS WITH US. There are many that we pray for each week; some we can share with the congregation and some we are asked to hold in confidence. Please know that all of your joys and concerns are important. You may contact the church office or email Rev. Penny Nixon, pnixon@ccsm-ucc.org, if you need support during the week.

We have four weeks...

by Jerri Handy

Books are being moved from shelves to boxes. Tasks have been clearly spelled out and are being checked off one by one. Excitement, fear, joy, sadness, gratitude and hope compete for space to be expressed. We have four more weeks.

Packing and un-packing provide moments of heart connection... I remember when I was given this stole or cross or book. I recall services where we used this or that from my office as part of the fabric of worship. Along with the books and stoles being packed, I am packing memories of sacred moments we have shared, from teaching *The Heart of Christianity* by Marcus Borg (one of my first assignments here at CCSM), to sitting at bedsides in homes and hospitals, to memorial services, to baptisms, to powerful worship experiences and so many more. These will always be with me, I am thankful. We have but four weeks.

We have just four weeks until my ministry as your pastor will come to a close. There have been times when my work with you has been truly outstanding, times when I have made mistakes, and a time I needed a break. Your celebration and your loving kindness helped me grow.

It is with excitement, fear, joy, sadness, gratitude and hope that Marge and I anticipate worship on April 12th. That is the day we are commissioned as missionaries. Sergio, Co-Director of Las Memorias, will be with us that weekend. Stay for a time of Fellowship in Kloss Hall. It will be a wonderful day to say goodbye. Thank you for sharing your lives with ours for the past six and a half years.

Over the next four months, I will head to San Diego to find an apartment and meet and connect with Global Ministries, Las Memorias, and the CCSM Border Trip, while Marge continues working and packing in San Mateo. In May, we'll finish things up in San Mateo, move to San Diego, and I'll head out to two months of language school while Marge sets up a new home and office. August 1 marks the first day of our new life together at Las Memorias.

We covet your prayers.



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Lay Preaching Class taught by Penny Nixon

Wednesdays, April 15 & 22, and Saturday, May 2, 9am - 1pm

This 3-session class will offer the basics of preparing and preaching a sermon. There will be homework assignments and by the Saturday session each person will preach a brief sermon. I have taught a class like this before and there were some amazing preachers!!! Class size is limited to 8 people. (We need 6 people signed up in order for class to happen). It will enhance your spiritual life and your public speaking skills. Please indicate your interest by emailing Penny at pnixon@ccsm-ucc.org.

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