

Welcome to the Anglican Church

Faithful Centurion



Descanso, California



an

Anglican Orthodox Church Parish

Scripture – Reason • Tradition

Serving God since 37AD

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Mission Statement

To minister to the spiritual needs of our congregation so we might effectively spread the Word of God and the good news of His Son Jesus Christ, our Savior, locally and throughout the world by prayer, word and deed in the Anglican tradition.

Who are we?

Often described as the Middle Way, walking a straight line between Roman Catholicism and radical Protestantism, Anglicans are Christians with their roots in the Church of England. The Church came to England in the first century AD with Roman soldiers and merchants. Although there are no written records until the fifth century, legend holds that Joseph of Arimethea, who provided the tomb for the burial of Jesus Christ, brought Christianity to England in 37 AD. He is said to have built a church in Glastonbury in Somerset. Whether Joseph of Arimethea was the first to carry the faith to England or not, Christianity did arrive in England by the middle of the first century and was established there by the middle of the second century. Saint Alban, who was killed in the year 304, is believed to be the first English Christian martyr, and the British church was represented at the Council of Arles in 314 AD. When the Romans left England around 400 AD, the Church was cut off from the rest of the world. In the year 597, Pope

Gregory the Great sent Augustine, Prior of the Abbey of Saint Andrew in Rome and recently consecrated as a bishop, as a missionary to England. There, to his surprise, he found a well established, vibrant church already in place. King Ethelbert and his Christian wife welcomed Augustine, and the king was converted and baptized. Augustine later became the first Archbishop of Canterbury. Augustine was apparently given significant latitude in allowing the English church to retain many of its deeply ingrained local customs and practices. That changed when William the Conqueror brought the by then Roman Catholic church back to England. The Church in England was taken over by the Church of Rome in 1066 AD.

Over the millennium of separation, the Church of Rome had developed a liturgical system of worship that provided an ordered approach to worship. This ordered approach instilled not only a disciplined and orderly worship, but through its weekly repetition insured the church would make inroads into the people's hearts.

While there was much good that had come about in the intervening time, by the 1500s, the Roman Church had grown far from its first century roots with professed beliefs not only not found in biblical teaching, but contrary to the written Word as found in the Bible. The gulf between the Church of Rome and the Bible had grown so great Bibles were not allowed in churches and most priests were not allowed access to them. This meant the "Word of God" was whatever the "Church" in Rome said it was. After almost 500 years of growing heresy, a group of English clergymen and laymen lead a split from the Church of Rome and formed the Church of England. The King of England was the titular head

of the Church under the religious guidance of the Archbishop of Canterbury. The first Book of Common Prayer was written in 1549 to bring the service of the Church in line with the teachings of the Bible. In addition, King James directed the placing of Bibles in each church in the common language so they could be read and understood by the people. The King James translation of 1611 is the most widely accepted and used biblical translation.

When people from England came to the New World, they brought their religion with them, not only the Puritans, but Church of England people, too. After the Revolutionary War, our split with the English Crown, the Church here became the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States. As the sun set on the British Empire, churches around the world changed names, mostly adopting the Anglican label. In the 1960s an insidious virus took hold of the Episcopal Church of the United States. People who did not believe in God, let alone the Bible, whose loyalty was not to the One True God, but rather to good feelings or perhaps the Devil took over. The church became a home for anti-establishment, anti-Christ pro-homosexual priests, then bishops. In 1979, a new prayer book was adopted, claiming to be a Book of Common Prayer with modernized language. It was not, it was actually the first attempt by the non-believers to change the Church from within. Since that time, the Episcopal Church has lost over 80 percent of its members. The declining numbers show that those who believe in everything believe in nothing and do not need to go to church to find out they are okay.

We are a traditional parish associated with the Anglican Orthodox Church, the church in the United States most closely aligned with the original Anglican principles. Each of our members has a strong commitment to biblical teachings. None of us is perfect, but we believe that by working together we can become at least somewhat better and spread the Word of God in a world that clearly needs it.

What do we believe?

We are a Christian Church whose beliefs are summarized in the Nicene Creed below:

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, And of all things visible and invisible:

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God; Begotten, not made, Being of one substance with the Father, By whom all things were made; Who for us men for our salvation came down from heaven And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary And was made man; And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried; And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures; And ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of the Father; And He shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead; Whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost, The Lord and Giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spake by the Prophets. And I believe one Catholic and Apostolic

Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, And I look for the resurrection of the dead, And the life of the world to come. *Amen*

We have a clear statement of our faith. We have also have clear guidance on the more esoteric parts of our faith and what we believe which are contained in the *Articles of Religion* in the back of our Book of Common Prayer. We believe in the Word of God and if you read Article Six, you will find that unless it can be proved by certain warrant of Holy Scripture it shall not be deemed necessary to believed for salvation. We believe we are saved only by the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ (Article Eleven); yet good works are pleasing to God (Article Twelve). We believe Deacons, Priests and Bishops should be married (Article Thirty-Two) as it says in the Bible. Read the Articles some time to see what we believe.

We believe we should be guided by:

Scripture • Reason • Tradition

a trifoil of a kind, as Richard Hooker put it:

“What Scripture doth plainly deliver, to that first place both of credit and obedience is due; the next whereunto is whatsoever any man can necessarily conclude by force of reason; after these the voice of the Church succeedeth. That which the Church by her ecclesiastical authority shall probably think and define to be true or good, must in congruity of reason over-rule all other inferior judgments whatsoever” (Laws, Book V, 8:2; Folger Edition 2:39,8-14).

He also said, "God is no captious sophister, eager to trip us up whenever we say amiss, but a courteous tutor, ready to amend what, in our weakness or our

ignorance, we say ill, and to make the most of what we say aright."

"Scripture does not destroy nature but perfects it, Scripture presupposes reason and requires its use and that Grace presupposes nature."

Rather than stand equally as a three legged stool, Scripture – Reason – Tradition form a three corded rope or line, the strength of which comes from Scripture, the direction from Reason and the beauty from Tradition.

Scripture

Our church is rooted in Holy Scripture. Our service by phrase count is 83% scripture; we take scripture seriously. Article Six of our *Articles of Religion* says:

Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the Faith, or thought to be requisite or necessary to salvation.

We seek through study to understand more fully the meaning of the Bible. We do not claim to find hidden meaning in the Word of God. We think, like the Constitution of the United States, the Bible means what it says. We are not complete literalists, rather we think the Bible was written to be understood by the people in terms they could appreciate. The meaning is clear to the reader and not hidden.

We believe the Word of God has the power to improve each of our lives, if only we will do what we are clearly told.

Reason

Reason is necessary for the understanding and application of scripture in all the areas in which scripture might be applied. Reason is God's greatest gift to human beings, enabling them to understand God's plan for the whole of reality, to situate themselves within it and to specify proper moral forms of human activity.

Reason means the clarity of Scripture, accessible through human thought. Revisionist moderns have taken "Reason" to refer to rational thinking over against the implied obscurity or irrelevancy of Scriptures. Rather the true meaning is that Scripture is clear and easily understandable in everything it speaks about and Church decisions should be subject to the "plain reading" of the text. Reason, after all is a gift of God, which enables us to understand God's plan for life through, not separate from, Scripture.

Tradition

Where we cannot find guidance in scripture or draw a conclusion from rational deduction, we look to the tradition of the Church.

We are all newcomers to the Church. Our Church is a direct descendant of the Church established in England about the year 37 AD. We were taken over by the Roman Church in 1066 AD and split from them in 1549 AD. We use a liturgical based service which follows the original 1549 service very closely. The language is not archaic; rather majestic. We are open to change, but find no value in change for the sake of change. We look to the traditions of our Church to guide us beyond Scripture and Reason, but never in conflict with them.

Bible

We look to the Bible as the inspired Word of God, the place we turn whenever we have questions or disputes to settle. What does Scripture say? There are many translations, but only one Authorized Version of the Bible, that commonly known as the King James Version. This is the Bible we use and the one in which we place our trust and confidence.

Liturgy or Free Flow?

A liturgy is literally an established formula for public worship in a church which uses prescribed forms. It is a set form of worship. The service is the same, with minor variations, every Sunday. Unlike some churches, it is not free flow based on the desires or whims of the pastor or congregation. Use of a liturgy insures that everything is covered every Sunday and throughout the Christian Year. A liturgy gives a needed and reassuring semblance of order in an otherwise sometimes disorderly world. The choice of readings for each Sunday insures the highlights of the Bible are covered each year, but does not discourage reading of the Bible. The liturgical service is contained within our Book of Common Prayer (BCP).

1928 Book of Common Prayer

The Anglican Orthodox Church uses the 1928 Book of Common Prayer (BCP), which is a direct descendant of the original 1549 Book of Common Prayer, unique to the United States, as a means of bringing worshippers who form the Body of Christ together. The Book of Common Prayer is common in the sense it is common to us all, a means not only to worship, to share our faith, but to bind us together as a common people, the Body of Christ. Using a BCP means whatever Anglican Church you might attend, in whatever country, you will feel at

home with the service. It also means the prayers you hear will be familiar to you, you will not have to wait until the end of each prayer to decide if you are willing to add the familiar “Amen”, which means you concur and affirm the foregoing prayer. The BCP is not just a collection of elegant words, it is a reordering and rearranging of Bible text to form a liturgy or order of service. The entire service is based on Biblical text. Rest assured, there is nothing in the service that cannot be found in or proved by Holy Scripture.

The Sunday Service

The Anglican Church has a liturgical based service, that is to say it is in a fixed form and varies only slightly from Sunday to Sunday.

Our music is a combination of contemporary songs with guitars before the service and traditional hymns with an organ during the service.

We use the 1928 Book of Common Prayer and announce the pages. You will be able to follow along easily.

The Sunday service is either Morning Prayer or Holy Communion, sometimes also referred to as The Holy Eucharist or The Great Thanksgiving but not The Mass (except those perhaps with Roman tendencies).

The service begins on page 67 of the Book of Common Prayer (BCP) and works its way through to page 84. There near the beginning of the service, on page 70, we will be reading the Collect for the Day, Epistle and Gospel, these are referred to as The Propers. There are separate Collects, Epistles and Gospels for each Sunday and some special days. They are found a bit further back in the BCP

starting on page 90. After the Collect, Epistle and Gospel, we come back to page 71 for the Nicene Creed and go page by page afterwards.

The service is very easy to follow if you just remember the jump to the Collect, Epistle and Gospel, then back to the Nicene Creed. If you notice, there are little *italicized* notes in the BCP which give directions for the service. These are referred to as “**rubrics.**” They are called **rubrics**, or **red text**, because in the older and fancier BCPs, they are printed in **red**. If you look at the rubrics, you will have a good idea of what is coming next.

If you have a few extra minutes, take a bit of time to carefully read one or more of the prayers in the service, think about what the words really mean.

Sunday School – Child Care – Kids in General

As Anglicans, we feel strongly that families should worship together. We have a short class before each service, the sermon is short our timeline is normally like this:

- 1000 Pre-Service Class on some aspect of what we believe or church history
- 1015 Holy Communion Service starts
- 1030 Sermon
- 1037 Holy Communion Service resumes
- 1100 Holy Communion Service ends
Let the post service goodies be consumed

We prefer to have the children worship with all of us. Yes, sometimes they squirm and sometimes they cry. No one minds this in the least. For the very small, bring a playpen or blanket, we have some lovely kids’ books in the Lending Library by the rear door.

The main thing is children get to participate in the worship of God and get used to the idea; a thing that will stay with them their entire life. This early training is calculated to instill the idea of worship and ingrain it deeply in their hearts.

Do you recall what Jesus said about the little children in Matthew Chapter 19, starting at Verse 13?

Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven. And he laid his hands on them, and departed thence.

We think our families are best served by worshipping together, parents leading from the front of the family, not pushing from the back. The pre-service lesson and sermons are understandable at various levels. Driving home, discuss them with your children, you may be surprised at what you missed.

The Dreaded Offering – How much should I put in?

Oddly enough, not a single penny. We want you to feel at home. We ask that newcomers do not contribute to the offering, other than to fill out a contact card. You won't be alone, many of our members contribute by mail.

The Card - We do ask that you fill out the colored card in your bulletin and put in the plate. The card is not just for newcomers. We ask that each of our

members fill out a card and place it in the offering plate with any special prayer requests.

We want you to feel at home in our church, to enjoy it as much as we do. If you decide you wish to attend our church on a regular basis, we would appreciate your financial support.

Our focus, our very reason for being, is to fulfill the Great Commission: To spread the Word. We don't have a building, we don't worry about money, our treasure is not here. We want to help our brothers find the Key to Heaven.

We are not here to serve a building. We intentionally chose to have our church services in a school auditorium rather than an expensive building. We want all we can muster go towards God's work and not a building; not just money, but effort.

What Anglicans believe about other religions?

This is probably best explained by the Anglican writer, CS Lewis, author of the well-known Chronicles of Narnia:

I have been asked to tell you what Christians believe, and I am going to begin by telling one thing that Christians do not need to believe. If you are a Christian you do not have to believe that all the other religions are simply wrong all through. If you are an atheist you do have to believe that the main point in all the religions are simply wrong all through. If you are an atheist you do have to believe that the main point in all the religions of the whole world is simply one huge mistake. If you are a Christian, you are free to think that all these religions, even the queerest ones, contain a least some hint of the truth. When I was an atheist I had to try to persuade myself that most of the human race have always been

wrong about the question that mattered to them most; when I became a Christian I was able to take a more liberal view. But, of course, being a Christian does mean thinking that where Christianity differs from other religions, Christianity is right and they are wrong. As in arithmetic—there is only one right answer to a sum, and all other answers are wrong: but some of the wrong answers are much nearer being right than others.” (CS Lewis, Mere Christianity, page 43)

But the truth is God has not told us what His arrangements about other people are. We do know that no man can be saved except through Christ; we do not know that only those who know Him can be saved through Him. But in the meantime, if you are worried about the people outside, the most unreasonable thing you can do is remain outside yourself.” (page 65).

The real point of all this is that we do not know what arrangements, if any, God has made for other people. We know what arrangements He made for us when He sent His Son to give His life that we might live. We don't want to take any chances.

What is Anglicanism?

Anglicanism is a word used to describe a Confederation of National Churches, throughout the world, currently in communion with the Archbishop of Canterbury, maintaining the historic Christian faith and order of the original Church. The Anglican Churches owe their historic origin to the mother Church of England. There are some 80 million Anglicans living in around the world. Our congregation is a member of the Anglican Orthodox Church. We are not associated with any organizations which demand compromise of belief.

Anglicanism is bound, above all, to Holy Scripture for the Bible is the “Word of God.” The Bible is the

record of God's revelation in Christ, the story of what God did, out of which the Good News comes all people of the world. In the Old Testament (Hebrew scriptures) God prepares people for his promise of a savior. In the New Testament God fulfills his promise. Together they tell of the story of divine redemption given to the Christian Church.

Anglicanism gives allegiance to the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed; and through these statements of faith, to the central Christian dogmas which the Creeds express. Every creedal statement is to be believed insofar as it may be proved (that is, tested) by an appeal to Scripture [Articles of Religion, Article 8 in the Book of Common Prayer].

Anglicanism has no official theologian in its history. It welcomes contributions from many theologians but it finds absolute authority in none. We learn from Augustine and Aquinas, and from Luther and Calvin, but we are not bound to any one or any set of theologians or school of thought.

In the Creed we have the essence of Scripture. Our system depends on the individual member keeping priests and bishops honest. If a priest or bishop teaches or preaches contrary to scripture, members are not only allowed, but rather expected to call them on it. As much as we adore our Book of Common Prayer and believe its editor Thomas Cranmer to have been divinely inspired in his editing, we recognize it as just that, editing. Bishop Cranmer simply recompiled scripture into a format that would allow more effective worship. He invented nothing and would be horrified if anyone thought he did.

We work to more fully understand the mind and working of God. God embodies, defines truth—He does not change. As truth, He cannot change. Sometimes our perception changes as we learn more about Him.

The correct interpretation of the Scriptures is critical as it records the truth of God's saving acts is passed down to us. We need to read and understand what Jesus said and did, which is recorded in Scripture, the Gospels. We need to read and understand to what Jesus' Apostles learned from Him and put into practice, which is recorded in Scripture, the Acts of the Apostles and the various Epistles. This is the Word of God written by eyewitnesses and those who heard their stories.

Anglicanism does not intend to preclude theological development nor deny the right use of human reason. However, it insists that nothing can be taught as necessary to salvation which is not contained in the Holy Scriptures. This is used to test any development as valid.

Anglicanism flourishes knowing that the basis for the Christian faith is in the saving acts of God, recorded in Holy Scripture. Likewise, Anglicanism appeals to history or tradition, believing the ancient Fathers of the Church provided an invaluable insight into the correct interpretation of the Scriptures which is sound and accurate—a standard by which later interpretation of the Scriptures should be judged.

Anglicanism is committed to thoughtful study and careful reasoning to spiritual, and indeed, every other realm of experience. If we are to appeal to Scripture and to its interpretation by the Fathers of

the Church (the first four centuries of Christian faith), we must employ our minds; fruitful Christian living demonstrates that our experience is enriched and deepened by the truth.

Anglicanism is not so much the statement of particular truths as it is a way of understanding and evaluating all truth. Instead of focusing on absolutes, it emphasizes the fullest expression of the truth for our Christian living. It recognizes the rightful place of divine authority. Anglicanism strives to embody orthodox living, evangelical zeal, and catholic (universal) belief.

Anglicanism is a network of national churches headed by Primates, or Archbishops, which may or may not be in communion with the Archbishop of Canterbury rather than a centrally controlled worldwide church like the Roman Church. In the past, the Archbishop of Canterbury served as the titular head of the Anglican Communion, but has never had “special powers” as to theology. While the office of the Archbishop of Canterbury had a special place in the church, he could not himself move the church from its theological position. At this time, the Archbishop of Canterbury has moved his office away from its foundation of Scripture, Reason, and Tradition following The Episcopal Church (TEC) rather than leading the worldwide communion. The drift away from the trifoil of Scripture, Reason, and Tradition has resulted in the development of a defensive “communion of bishops and congregations” necessary to the need of laity and clergy to embody in their own daily life and fellowship this foundation of Scripture, Reason, and Tradition. It is hoped the continuing churches will come together to form a new national church in the Anglican tradition.

The Church of the Faithful Centurion invites you to explore God’s purpose for your life with a focus on Scripture, Reason, and Tradition. Every Sunday, at 1000L (10:00am) before the start of each service, we conduct a ten minute class to help us understand God’s purpose for our lives. We experience God’s presence so that we enjoy the abundant life God has planned for the present and into eternity.



Anglican Orthodox Church – Why did we associate with them?

History

The Anglican Orthodox Church (AOC) is one of the older conservative Anglican denominations in the United States (founded in 1963) that is not in communion with the Archbishop of Canterbury of the Church of England due to the abandonment of Reformation doctrine by that church. Its founding bishop was James Parker Dees, who left the Episcopal Church due to its immoral policies and doctrinal errors. He served as Presiding Bishop of the AOC until his death on December 25, 1990.

The late Most Rev James Parker Dees previously served as priest of the Episcopal Church but left that church over his concern that it had become steadily more politically and theologically liberal. In so doing, he acted about a decade and a half before a larger number of conservative Episcopalians separated from the Episcopal Church following the decision of its General Convention to approve the ordination of women priests. Today the AOC has national church affiliates in 22 countries around the world.

Beliefs and Structure

The Anglican Orthodox Church today firmly holds to the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion, the use of the 1928 Book of Common Prayer, the Homilies, and the King James Version of the Bible. The AOC understands the Bible is the divinely inspired word of God and contains all that is necessary for salvation. Additionally, the church preaches the importance of biblical morality both in an individual's life and as public policy. The AOC strongly identifies itself as being in the Anglican Low Church tradition and rejects the use of the title "Father" for its clergy, many of the priestly vestments commonly used in other Anglican jurisdictions, and any veneration of the saints.

The church has been led by the Most Reverend Jerry L. Ogles of Enterprise, Alabama since 22 October 2000. He is the Bishop of the United States and the Metropolitan of the Anglican Orthodox Church's worldwide communion. The AOC has fourteen parishes in the USA and Canada, plus bishops and churches in Canada, India, Liberia, Madagascar, South Africa, Kenya, Tanzania, Central African Republic, Haiti, the Philippines, Fiji, Peru, Argentina, and the Solomon Islands.

The church holds a biennial convention at St. Peter's Anglican Orthodox Church in even-numbered calendar years. The headquarters of the Anglican Orthodox Church remain in the church's traditional facilities in Statesville, North Carolina along with Bishop Dees' home parish, St. Peter's Anglican Orthodox Church.

Community Services

The area our church serves, San Diego County, is a relatively wealthy area, financially, but spiritually it is lacking in many resources. Mindful of CS Lewis admonition that a Christian lawyer or teacher will impact more peoples lives than a Christian priest, each of our parishioners is charged to live their lives as examples of our Lord's power to those around them.

As a parish, we do more than just mouth the words, we lead by example. We participate in various community outreach programs and provide counseling and spiritual assistance to those in need and spread the Word throughout the world.

Contact Us

See us on the web at:

Church

<http://www.faithfulcenturion.org/>

Prayer Team

<http://faithfulcenturionprayerteam.blogspot.com/>

Ministry Minute

<http://www.churchofthefaithfulcenturion.blogspot.com/>

Free Teen Guitar Class

<http://www.freeteenguitarclass.com/>

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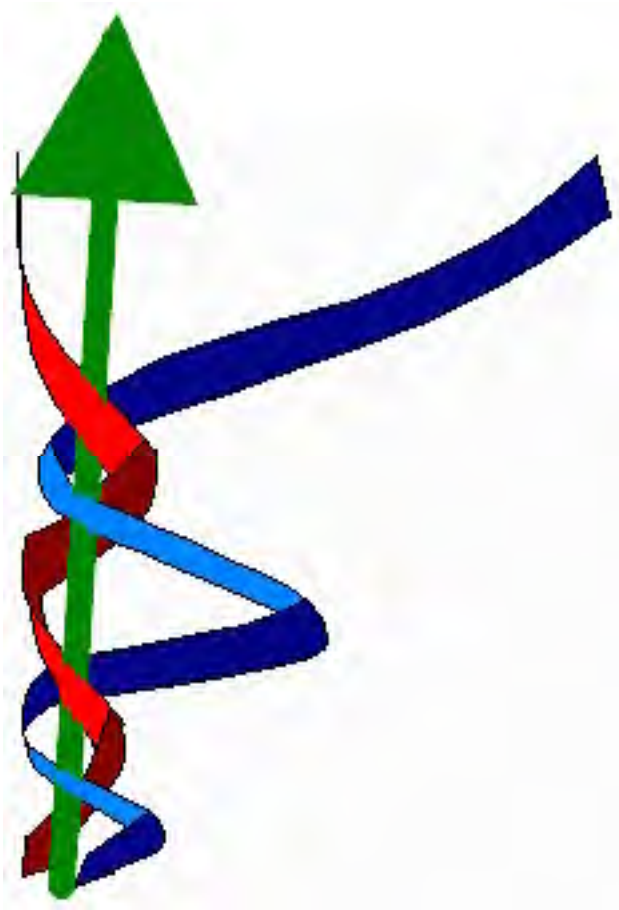
(619) 800-3006

Join Us

Join us for one of our services:

Sunday1000 (10:00am)
10603 Burrell Way
Descanso, CA 91916

While other churches wander, the Anglican church has kept to the same course since 37 AD. God does not change with fashions and neither have we.



Every Saint has a Past Every Sinner has a Future

OPR: Hap Arnold

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