

Ecumenical Choir wants an Encore!

By happy co-incidence, Northampton Cathedral's service to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Vatican II document *Unitatis Redintegratio*, the Restoration of Unity, was held during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. In planning this event, which was to bring together a large number of regional Church Leaders ranging from Catholic and Greek Orthodox to Pentecostal churches, the choice of music needed to be easily accessible to enable everyone to participate fully. Colossians 3:16 says "With gratitude in your hearts sing psalms and hymns and inspired songs to God..." so we choose a range of music, and as this was a 50th Anniversary celebration we also decided to form an ecumenical choir of 50 singers to sing the Hallelujah Chorus!



Restricting this to people who had sung the Hallelujah Chorus before, so that a minimum number of rehearsals would be needed, we advertised through a network of Catholic and ecumenical connections and the local RSCM. The first two basses signed up at Prayer & Praise for Northampton, which that month was held at the New Testament Church of God. News spread, more singers volunteered, and after an interview on local radio, our ecumenical choir of 50 people was complete, made up of singers from 23 local churches, from Anglican, Catholic, Baptist, Methodist and Pentecostal denominations. After only two rehearsals, they confidently led the congregation in song, and ended the service with a most joyful and uplifting performance of the Hallelujah Chorus.

Some music from Taizé was used very effectively to accompany a symbolic action, in which all were invited to dip their hand into a bowl of water, as a sign of our shared Baptism. It was a significant gesture, accompanied by the gentle chant of There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, based on Ephesians Chapter 4. A second chant, *Laudate Dominum*, omnes gentes, Alleluia, joyfully led up to the proclamation of the Gospel by the Greek Ecumenical Patriarchate. Afterwards, a Nigerian Pentecostal



minister in the congregation told me that he had never heard of music from Taizé before, but he had been moved by the beauty of *Laudate Dominum*, even though it was in a language that he did not know. Such is the power of God's gift of music.

50 years ago, this ecumenical choir would have been unthinkable and impossible. We have clearly come a long way since then, as the willingness of these people from different churches to sing and unite as a team has illustrated. The sheer joy and power of making music together in God's house, has left a deep impression on us all, as we expressed and experienced our desire for unity in this way.

The verse of Psalm 117 on which *Laudate Dominum* is based says: Praise the Lord all you nations, praise him all you peoples. Alleluia! If by forming ecumenical choirs for special occasions, we could hasten the day when ALL peoples will experience what it means to praise the Lord, what an Encore there would be!



Teresa Brown

Link to Read more about this event:

<http://www.devinemusic.org.uk/ecumenical-events/ecumenical-choir/>

Young people at the CTE Forum Urgent – Applications by Friday



[Chemin Neuf](#) in Liverpool is helping us to plan the [Tuesday evening](#) session at Forum. It will be led by a [team of twelve](#) young people who will be [fully funded](#) to attend *Welcome to Paradise*. [Interested?](#)

Welcome to Paradise

We encourage young people from all CTE's Member Churches to attend the Chemin Neuf [Welcome to Paradise](#) experience:

- At [Abbaye d'Hautecombe](#) near Lake Bourget in Savoy, France.
- From Sunday 2 August 2015 at 4.00 pm till Sunday 9 August at 3.00 pm, though, realistically, from England, this would be early Saturday morning to early Monday morning.
- [Watch the trailer](#)

How much will it cost?

- The cost, including coach travel from either London or Liverpool is £300.00. Other pick-up points are also possible.
- A sponsor is subsidising those who live in Merseyside, reducing their cost to £240.00.
- [The team of twelve, who also commit to attending the Forum on Tuesday 29 September, will have their costs covered.](#)

Not sure it's for you? See how [last year](#) went and [watch its trailer](#).

Interested? Download the flyer and application form below. And consider [applying to be part of the team of twelve](#). If you want to be in touch with someone about *Welcome to Paradise*, [Tim Watson](#) is very happy to help. Please be aware that you need a valid [European Health Insurance Card](#) for this trip.

Day delegates to the Forum We hope that young people will come to the Forum as [day delegates](#) on Tuesday 29 September. There will be no charge for this.

 [W2P UK Festival Registration 2015](#) (544KB)

 [W2P UK flyer 2015](#) (71KB)

Papers re Pentecostal and Multicultural Relations



This is an area for papers re theology, praxis, unity and relations among Pentecostal and multicultural networks in England. The work is supported by [Joe Aldred](#).

Joe writes, 'Attached are two papers that have been discussed in the most recent CTE Pentecostal constituency meeting: 'The Spiritual State of the Nation' by Rev Dr Clifford Hill; and 'Theological Education in Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches' by Dr R David Muir. These are not CTE or Pentecostal position papers but resource material for your perusal and further distribution at your discretion'.

Download [The Spiritual State of the Nation](#) by Rev Dr Clifford Hill

Download [Theological Education in Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches](#) by Dr R David Muir

Link to The [Pentecostal and Charismatic Constituency](#) by Rev Dr Hugh Osgood

THE THEOLOGY AND UNITY GROUP

This is an update of information on the CTE website re The Theology and Unity Group. The Group exists for two main purposes.

The first is to address issues brought before us by member churches, usually either in situations where they would welcome an ecumenical perspective on an aspect of their own faith and order work or in situations where they are aware that developments within their own church might touch sensitivities elsewhere.



The second is to monitor ecumenical developments from beyond the immediate English situation that have relevance to our churches. In particular, we look at key statements from the World Council of Churches Faith and Order department and from the international bilateral dialogues. Examples of the latter would be the recent WCC statement in ecclesiology *The Church: Towards A Common Vision* and the recent statement of the international Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue *From Conflict to Communion-Lutheran-Catholic Common Commemoration of the Reformation in 2017*. We have twice looked at ecumenical matters relating to continental Europe. We also reviewed the recent developments towards closer unity between the Covenanting Churches in Wales.

We meet three times a year, twice for day meetings, usually in the late autumn and early Spring, and once for an overnight residential in the summer.

The members consist mainly of people representing our [member churches](#). They also include two members from [bodies in association](#), the Ecumenical Society of the Blessed Virgin Mary and The Society for Ecumenical Studies. In addition, there are two members of CTE staff, David Cornick as General Secretary of CTE and Jenny Bond, plus our chairman, Rev. Prof. David Thompson and David Carter as secretary.

Every three years, before the Forum, a report summarising key points in our work will be issued and put on the website. The secretary, [David Carter](#), is always happy to help with enquiries about our work and faith and order issues in general.

 [2015 Report](#) (13KB)

Book Reviews

Here are some recent book reviews which have been kindly contributed on matters to do with theology and unity. They are not in any priority order. If you have a review you would like to submit for publication on this site, please send it to [Jim.Currin\(AT\)cte.org.uk](mailto:Jim.Currin(AT)cte.org.uk) for consideration.

[The Early Church at Work and Worship](#)

Catachesis, Baptism, Eschaology and Martyrdom by Everett Francis

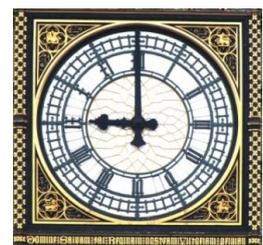
[Like a Mighty Army](#)

The Salvation Army, the Church and the Churches by David Taylor



"Where's the Review?" say Churches and charities

It has been 100 days since the Work and Pensions Select Committee called for a full independent review of the benefit sanctions system, but the Government has not indicated any intention to conduct a review. A group of Churches and charities is calling urgently for the Government to heed the Committee's report and act on its recommendations.



In the same 100 day period last year, 346,256 people who were on Jobseeker's Allowance and 35,554

people on Employment Support Allowance were referred for sanctions. 92,558 of those referrals were the result of bureaucratic error. These resulted in 175,177 sanctions for Jobseekers and 11,129 for those out of work due to ill health. The call for a review is supported by the Baptist Union of Great Britain, the Church of Scotland, the Church in Wales, the Methodist Church, the United Reformed Church and by charities Church Action on Poverty, Gingerbread and Mind.

"The case has been made," said Paul Morrison, Public Issues Policy Adviser for the Methodist Church. "The sanctions system requires fundamental review and we call upon the new Parliament to respond positively to the recommendations of the Select Committee. Churches and charities are backing this call because we see day by day the harm that benefit sanctions cause in the communities we serve. We recognise the hiatus caused by the General Election, but hope that the new Parliament will recognise the urgency of this matter and announce a full independent inquiry as soon as possible."

In March this year the Churches called for such a review in their report [Time to Rethink Benefit Sanctions](#), which cited new evidence about the negative impact of the current regime. The report revealed that around 100,000 children were affected by sanctions in 2013/14. The data, obtained under the Freedom of Information Act, also shows that people who receive the sickness and disability benefit Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) because of a long-term mental health problem are being sanctioned at a rate of more than 100 per day.

"The vast majority of people who are out of work due to their mental health want to work. But the constant threat of sanctions causes a great deal of distress, making people more unwell and a return to work less likely. We support the Churches' call for the Government to commission an independent review into sanctions policy." The Churches are asking people to [write to their MPs](#).

A full data set is available from [Anna Drew](#), Lead Media Officer, Methodist Church House, 25 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5JR. Telephone: 020 7467 5191

For a more full report visit:
http://www.cte.org.uk/Articles/443380/Home/News/Latest_news_articles/Wheres_the_Review.aspx

Germinate Leadership programme

Janet Bryer writes in June 2015:

'Germinate Leadership is an exciting programme on creative leadership in the rural church run by the Arthur Rank Centre. The programme aims to develop creative and entrepreneurial skills in lay and ordained leaders from the rural church. It is a subsidised 18 month programme which includes 360 degree appraisal, a residential event, input and peer days, mentoring and work shadowing.



A blend of learning styles is used, incorporating wisdom and experience from both secular and church leadership spheres. As a result it is practical, relevant, and tailored to the person and context. It is open to lay and ordained leaders in the rural church from all denominations who have already displayed some creative and entrepreneurial flair in ministry and are keen to develop themselves and their skills.

A cohort of around 15-20 people both lay and ordained from a mixed denominational background take part in the programme which enhances learning and personal development. Each participant will have a mentor to support them through the programme and will also become part of small self-supporting peer groups. The programme starts on Wednesday 30th September 2015 with an induction day at Stoneleigh Park Warwickshire. The costs of the programme is £1,150 including a three day residential. There are a limited number of bursaries available where this will help participation'.

[For further information please see here.](#)

Christian Aid Welcomes Game Changing Papal Encyclical



Christian Aid has praised Pope Francis for his call for a radical rethinking of humanity's relationship with the earth and urged both people of faith in all walks of life, and especially politicians, to heed his appeal for action to address climate change. Christian Aid's Director of Policy and Public Affairs, Christine Allen, said the intervention was a natural extension for his ministry for those in poverty. She said: "The hallmark of Pope Francis' ministry has been his care for the poor. You can't claim to care for the poor and ignore climate change. Climate change is not just a scientific phenomenon, or a political football, it is a moral issue which demands an ethical response.

"To those suffering the effect of climate change and those who feel politicians are letting them down, this is a message of hope. People of faith must hear the call to stand alongside people of every nation and work together, not letting narrow self-interest or national politics block our common need. Even more than that the vision of faith calls everyone to recognise our dependence on the natural world and calls us to reassess all our actions that damage our fellow creatures.

"We've heard the scientists, and the economists and the politicians; it's now time for faith leaders to speak up. Not only is the Pope speaking to Catholics, he's addressing the whole world. My hope is that faith leaders of every kind will follow Pope Francis' example and recognise that they have a crucial role to play in putting humanity back on track towards a sustainable and prosperous planet. "What is most welcome about the Pope's contribution is its timing. We are the first generation to feel the effects of climate change and the last that can do something to stop it. In a few months, nations meet in Paris to strike a global climate deal which will begin to put us on the road to a low carbon world. It is vital that leaders respond to this by reducing carbon emissions and delivering support for vulnerable communities already suffering.

"Hopefully the Pope's game changing intervention will light a rocket under politicians who need to show the same kind of urgency being demonstrated by the Vatican." Ms Allen added that Pope Francis is joining a growing movement of people concerned about the impact humans are having on the environment."

Ms Allen also praised the intervention of Justin Welby, the Archbishop of Canterbury, who, along with other UK faith leaders, signed the Lambeth Declaration calling for governments to limit global warming to less than two degrees Celsius above pre industrial levels. She said: "Climate change is our common enemy and tackling it will require people coming together to strive for the common good. The Lambeth Declaration demonstrates just the kind of unity that will be needed on a global scale. Politicians could do well to follow this example as they work to bring about a low carbon world. "Justin Welby and the other faith leaders are right to highlight the disproportionate impact climate change is having on the poor and to identify this as a matter of injustice."

For more information contact [Joe Ware](#). 24 hour Christian Aid press duty phone - 07850 242950

The Journey to Christian Unity: A personal RC perspective



"The Journey to Christian Unity: a personal RC Perspective" was compiled by Margaret Leadox, a religious sister belonging to the Congregation "Salesian Sisters of St. John Bosco." She is involved with Churches Together in "Battersea Riverside" in South London and also works as a member of the RC Southwark Diocese Unity Commission.

It is a personal discussion paper and is not a position paper of either the Roman Catholic Church or Churches Together in England. It is provided as a contribution to the ecumenical journey for further discussion and reflection in Churches Together groups.

Sister Margaret writes: 'This text began a few years ago, as personal notes I used when addressing a small group of people from my parish – trying to give them a simple historical background to the concept of ecumenism and hoping to arouse some interest in working for Christian Unity. With the help of further

research, my notes gradually developed to this present format in the following five topics:

- 1 Jesus' desire that his followers should be ONE, and then the efforts of the early Christian Church to stay as ONE.
- 2 The increasing number of differences of opinion and divisions over the centuries.
- 3 Emerging ecumenism.
- 4 Struggles to break down prejudice – joined by the commitment made at Vatican II.
- 5 The ecumenical situation today, and how the Holy Spirit is gradually leading us to the unity Jesus wants.

Hopefully this text will prove instructive not only for Catholics but also for Christians from other traditions, and be of help in bringing about a better mutual understanding'.

This paper is provided for further study and reflection. Contact the web manager for further information or for contact with Margaret leadox if any amendment/follow up is requested.

[Download a PDF of the paper](#)

National Photography Competition Turns Spotlight on Faith Diversity



Amateur photographers are invited to enter Faith Through a Lens photography competition.

Faith Through a Lens, an annual photography competition which aims to profile the positive effects of faith within a diverse range of communities, is now open for entries. This not for profit competition, supported by Congregational & General Charitable Trust, encourages amateur photographers from across the UK to capture what faith means to them.

Ten shortlisted finalists will be invited to an exclusive awards ceremony held in Central London on Friday 13th November 2015 to meet lead judge Don McCullin who will critique each of the shortlisted images. This is followed by the announcement of the overall winner and two highly commended entries. These three winning entrants will be invited to nominate any UK registered charity, faith or community group to receive £1,000 worth of audio-visual or photography equipment of their choice, along with claiming £1,000 and £850 worth of personal prizes respectively. Each finalist will also receive photography prizes worth £250 which includes Albelli vouchers, a Huggler photo book, Rachel Bridgen Photography tuition vouchers and Serif software packages.

The judging panel comprises internationally renowned photojournalist Don McCullin who has been lead judge since the competition began in 2010. He is joined by Aaqil Ahmed, Head of Religion and Ethics at the BBC; Rev Dr David Cornick from Churches Together in England; Paresh Solanki, representing Inter Faith Network; award winning photojournalist Hazel Thompson and Stuart Young from Congregational & General Charitable Trust.

Stuart Young from the Congregational & General Charitable Trust, said: "In launching Faith Through a Lens 2015, we hope to capture the vibrant, diverse and significant role faith plays in people's lives. "The judges are looking for an original and creative image that stands out and encapsulates faith. The image could depict a moment of faith, community spirit against the odds or illustrate a community hero. "We have received some thought provoking interpretations in the past and we look forward to seeing more in this years' competition."

Faith Through a Lens is open for amateur photographers over the age of 16 until 12th October 2015. There are no restrictions on the type of camera that can be used, or the techniques used to produce the final image. Images from mobile/smart phones and tablets are welcomed.

[Click here for more information and to enter this year's competition](#)

Living The Joy of The Gospel Durham Cathedral, Sunday 6th September at 3.30pm



Christians from around the North East are invited to join together for a service to celebrate our common call to proclaim the Gospel, and rededicate ourselves anew to the vital ministry of mission and evangelisation.

The service will in part be a 'dialogue' between the Archbishop of York, the Most Revd and Rt Hon. Dr John Sentamu, and the Archbishop of Liverpool, the Most Revd Malcolm McMahon, and conclude with a commission to live out the joy of the Gospel in our communities. The service is being jointly hosted by Bishop Séamus Cunningham and Rt Revd Paul Butler the Bishop of Durham.

This initiative has been inspired in part by the warm and positive meetings of the Archbishop of Canterbury with Pope Francis and their reflections on ecumenical mission and evangelisation particularly in response to the Pope's apostolic exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium* (The Joy of the Gospel).

All are welcome to attend, and parish groups will be encouraged to engage in preparation for the event through a series of Bible studies before the day, on the theme of 'telling our stories.' These will focus particularly on the stories of St Andrew, St Mary Magdalene, the Ethiopian (from Acts 8. 26 - 39), and St Paul.

For free preparatory material and registration please contact;

Anglicans - alexander.crawford@durhamcathedral.co.uk

Catholics - marymichael.lee7@googlemail.com

Churches Together - andrea.murray@diocesehn.org.uk

Churches Combating Modern Slavery - Human Trafficking



Dear Co-workers in Christ,

Greetings! I am Elizabeth Joy who has recently joined Churches Together in England (CTE) as a Volunteer. The CTE Board has asked that I work with Bishop Joe Aldred on a project tentatively called Churches Combating Modern Slavery-Human Trafficking (CCMS-HT). This initiative is in response to the CTE Pentecostal Churches' call for the establishing of a hub to which they can relate to in addressing this issue of Modern Slavery-Human Trafficking. While this initiative is driven by and at the Pentecostal Churches, other members of CTE and beyond are welcome to join in this venture. Therefore, I wish to share with you briefly what has happened thus far in the process of developing this programme and invite you and your church to join in and be actively engaged in this initiative.

Many of us representing various CTE member Churches attended a Round Table meeting with the Home Secretary, Teresa May MP and others on 10th March 2015 to discuss the Anti-Slavery Bill, express support on behalf of the Churches and plan for future networking. We are very glad to inform you that the long struggle that many in the political, social and religious sectors led separately and together became fruitful as the Anti-Slavery Bill was passed in the UK Parliament as an Act on 26th March 2015. A brief report that we received from Stephen Pickett is attached herewith for an update on the Anti-Slavery Act which is self-explanatory. Frodsham Churches in Cheshire have been working against Trafficking for the last three years.

Prior to the above mentioned Round Table meeting, we had networked with Christian communities and secular organisations working against Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking in different ways. These include the Human Trafficking Foundation, Stop the Traffik UK, and churches already involved.

While some CTE member Churches are in the fore-front addressing these issues and concerns, a dire need was felt to bring other CTE member Churches on board. In order to achieve this, a few meetings were organised. Following seminars in the House of Lords and at the Watford Gap offices of the Human Trafficking Foundation, we are happy to report that a good number of Churches are showing keen interest to engage actively. They are eager to join others in raising awareness and putting an end to Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking.

As we develop this project, we look forward to having the following initiatives to begin with and request your participation in strengthening and promoting this project:

1. Helping to promote Freedom Sunday on 18th October 2015 in our churches. We have been part of the core group that is planning for this Sunday.
2. A one day consultation in November/December 2015 with the new Anti-Slavery Commissioner Mr Kevin Hyland as a keynote speaker. We hope to bring together representatives from CTE member Churches and beyond.
3. A project to focus on the plight of women caught up in Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking in the UK is on its way. This will explore how we could support them in their journey to freedom. Dr Carrie Pemberton Ford is in the process of submitting a project proposal, and we look forward to her suggestions with her vast experience as the founding CEO of CHASTE (Churches Alert to Sex Trafficking Across Europe).

We will be very glad to hear from you about any aspect of this new initiative and would be greatly helped were you able to find a designated representative from your Church who can work with us that together we can address this issue by raising awareness, supporting victims and putting an end to modern Slavery-Human Trafficking.



Looking forward to your response, continued support and participation,
Elizabeth Joy <elizabeth.joy@cte.org.uk>

[Download PDF of a letter introducing CCMS-HT from Elizabeth Joy](#)

The Game of Life resource re Rugby World Cup

The GAME OF LIFE Resource was created to support the work of Engage 2015 in its mission to develop all the resources that you and your church will need to successfully run missional activities around the Rugby World Cup.



Engage 2015 is a cross denominational campaign set up to help UK churches engage in mission around the Rugby World Cup 2015.

Aimed at Church Leaders and organisations, the GAME OF LIFE Resource Pack contains all the resources for missional activities around the Rugby World Cup you and your church will need. The GAME OF LIFE Resource Pack consists of a DVD and an accompanying 20 page resource booklet, specifically designed to help guide you through organising events in your Church or Community. The GAME OF LIFE Resource Pack is sold individually.

INCLUDED IN THE PACK:

- A short video relating the story of the Christian roots of Rugby Union
- A series of ten, three minute video interviews with Christian professional rugby players
- An array of PDF Resources for schools, Sunday Schools, Holiday Clubs and Churches
- 2 Evangelistic short videos featuring Roy Crowne & Rico Tice, perfect for guest events
- Creative rugby linked prayer ideas and material for guest events
- A rugby related Sports Quiz for any size of event
- Key statistics and information about Rugby World Cup 2015

More information and order form: www.gameofliferesource.co.uk

Oikocredit 40th Anniversary

At the forefront of sustainable development using investors' capital - an article from Oikocredit, a [Body in Association](#) of Churches Together in England, 2 July 2015, by Monica Middleton.



40 years of existing is reason enough to celebrate. But even more so when one's birth marked the beginning of a world-wide movement founded on the principles of justice, self-reliance and economic empowerment for all, with a mission to alleviate conditions of poverty by providing credit and resources to the most disadvantaged, financially-excluded, "unbankable" communities in the world.

Oikocredit were joined by 300 guests from over 30 countries at the St. Elizabeth's Church in Berlin-Mitte on 11 June 2015 to help reflect on its 40 years as a pioneer and world-wide leader of private social impact investing, and to discuss sustainable development over the next 40 years.

[Link to the article](#)

Go for Growth

Go for Growth is an exciting major ecumenical conference on Church growth, run by Churches Together in Hertfordshire together with surrounding county ecumenical bodies, touching upon growth in all its dimensions - numerical, spiritual, pastoral, organizational, missional, theological and socially transforming.

There will be a panel of people with experience to share from different churches, chaired by Mike Booker (co-author of Evangelism - which way now? and of Making New Disciples, published by SPCK autumn 2015') and a series of informative and stimulating breakout groups. The panel includes Clare Ward, Bishop Angaelos, Jane Litchmore-Grant, Graham Cray and Paul Griffiths, and the event will be held at the Focalare Centre in Welwyn Garden City.



[Link to Go for Growth website for information and booking](#)

As previously noted:

Proclaim'15 Request for Prayer

HE Cardinal Vincent Nichols, one of the six Presidents of CTE, invites all Christians in England to share in prayer for Proclaim '15 and a major conference of 800 delegates from parishes covered by the Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales meeting in Birmingham on Saturday 11th July with 10 ecumenical guests co-ordinated by from Churches Together in England.



Loving Father,
You so loved the world that you sent us your only Son,
that we might believe in him and have eternal life.
May we encounter Jesus Christ anew this day
and live the Good News with joy.
Through the power of your Holy Spirit,
help us to "go out to the whole world and proclaim"
our faith with confidence.
Give us the courage to witness to the Joy of the Gospel
by our words and actions.
Help our parish to become more welcoming and missionary,
so that you may be known and loved by all people.
We make this prayer through Our Lord Jesus Christ Your Son,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God for ever and ever,
Amen.

[Information, resources, and introduction video re Proclaim '15](#)

And finally Re August CTe-News

We do not normally have a mailing in August but there is so much news we shall have an interim mailing this year to keep readers up to date. It will be news items but without a Reflection of the Month.

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This mailing is from Churches Together in England and is sent once a month

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