Please pass on these important dates to someone you know who may be discerning a call to ministry.

**Important dates**

**Dokimazo (dok-im-ad’-zo)**

*Fall: Oct. 9-10 | Spring: April 2-3, 2017*

Verb: 1. A Greek word meaning to put to the test, prove, examine, discern
2. An event at Luther Seminary filled with the sharing of stories and discernment of the call to Christian public leadership

**Scholarship weekend**

*Feb. 26-27*

All applicants for the Presidential Scholarship should plan to attend!

Visit [www.luthersem.edu/admissions](http://www.luthersem.edu/admissions) for other events.

**Scholarship deadlines**

**Priority dates for Seminary Scholarships**
- June 1 for fall starts
- Nov. 1 for J-term/spring starts

**Presidential and Wallace Scholarships**
- Jan. 31

**Admission application deadlines**
- Fall 2016: July 1
- J-Term 2017: Nov. 1
- Spring 2017: Dec. 1
- Summer 2017: May 1

[www.luthersem.edu/refer](http://www.luthersem.edu/refer)

**LUTHER SEMINARY**

**SEE INSIDE**

for a special Admissions insert. **Pass it on** to someone you know who has gifts for ministry!
Spring Contents

www.luthersem.edu

4 Letter from the president

6 Growing leadership
Efrem Smith, ’96, serves the broader church as CEO of World Impact

8 Humble Growth
Jodi Houge, ’09, experiences change, growth and blessing in neighborhood congregation

10 Finding the relevant
Dan Shaw, ’02, redefines ministry in context

12 Growing Daylight
Nathan Roberts, ’12, co-leads and grows a ministry in Kapenguria, Kenya

16 Leading the way
Betsy Miller, ’10, uses her D.Min. education to imagine new ministries

17 Open doors
Mikyoung Park, ’09, follows where God leads

18 Still called
Rob James, ’06, takes risks, partners with community to grow his congregation

20 His hands and feet
Rose Mary Sánchez-Guzmán, ’96, continues to build understanding on Mexican border

22 A world of perspective
Amanda Olson de Castillo, ’04, carries ministry lessons from Guatemala to Minnesota
Dear Friends,

We have been working hard as a learning community these past months to craft our strategic vision and priorities for the coming years. We are eager to share the fruit of this wide consultation and visioning in the coming months to which many of you have contributed. One of the key questions in our conversations has been asking what kind of impact Luther Seminary had in the past and what that might mean for the future flourishing of our mission to educate leaders for Christian communities. This edition of Story endeavors to share with you some of what we have learned about the impact Luther Seminary has by the gifts of the Holy Spirit and through the ministry of our graduates.

You will read stories of impact through innovative ministries, impact in service to our active-duty military, impact in leadership with our ecumenical partners and much more. These stories recount the impact of a robust theological education that meets students where they are and equips them for lively engagement in a changing church.

As we continue to hone and focus our strategic priorities, what is emerging is our impact on transforming leaders, transforming community and transforming collaboration.

Paul writes in Romans 12:2: “Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your minds.” Being transformed by the renewing of our minds seems a fitting frame of reference for our strategic priorities and for the stories we share with you in the following pages.

We’re eager to hear your own stories of how God’s Holy Spirit is working through you to make an impact in your community.

Peace and joy,

Robin Steinke, President
A decade of growth

Luther Seminary saw many changes over the last decade-plus. We’ve launched programs, sent thousands of graduates into God’s world and spread the gospel in myriad ways. Here’s a look at some of our more notable progress.

**Children, Youth and Family Ministry distributed learning program**
2002—Program launched
Feb. 4, 2004—First student graduates
Present—Luther Seminary has graduated 64 students from the program.

**Master of Divinity distributed learning program**
Fall 2007—First 14 students begin distributed learning Master of Divinity classes
2011—First students graduate
Present—A total of 58 Master of Divinity graduates have earned their degrees through the distributed learning program.

**Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) programs**
2002—Five-year D.Min. in Congregational Mission and Leadership (CML) launched
2004—Three-year D.Min. in Biblical Preaching (BP) launched
May 22, 2007—Ten D.Min. CML students and nine D.Min. BP students graduate.
Present—Luther Seminary now claims a total of 137 D.Min. alums from the combined programs.

**The Bible Initiative**
2007—Donors David and Andrea Hayes start The Bible Initiative: Pass It On Project with the gift of 400 hardcover pew Bibles. The Bibles were placed in the two Luther Seminary chapels with an inscription reading, in part: “If you are in need of a Bible, or you know someone who needs the Word of God, please accept this Bible as a gift from the seminary. The Bible will be replaced.”
2009—The challenge is extended to up to 20 graduates each spring. Each graduate promises to replace the Bibles in their congregation’s pews once they’re given away.
Present—More than 150 pastors and 166 congregations have participated in giving away 26,787 NRSV, large-print and Spanish Bibles.

**Working Preacher**
November 2007—WorkingPreacher.org, a free, one-of-a-kind preaching resource, is launched by Luther Seminary’s Center for Biblical Preaching.
Present—Working Preacher received 3.25 million visits in the last year, and 12.7 million cumulative visits since January 2008.

**Enter the Bible**
August 2009—Luther Seminary launches EntertheBible.org, a free, online resource exploring all 66 books of the Bible.
Present—The site was visited 318,000 times in the past 12 months, and has received 1.6 million cumulative visits since its launch.
EFREM SMITH HAS NEVER LIMITED HIS CONCEPT OF CHURCH TO A LOCATION FOR SUNDAY WORSHIP. Growing up in the Minneapolis congregations of Park Avenue United Methodist and Redeemer Missionary Baptist, Smith regarded church as the anchor of his community.

Today, that vision is linking fledgling churches with established congregations, communities in need with freshly trained missionaries and prisoners with pastors. As CEO of the acclaimed urban missions organization World Impact, Smith, ’96, calls on a lifetime of training.

During college, he staffed the summer church programs he so valued as a teenage participant. After focusing on his passion for urban ministry at Luther Seminary, he applied it as pastor of The Sanctuary Covenant Church in Minneapolis, whose dramatic growth under Smith was highlighted in Story in 2009. He then served the Evangelical Covenant Church denomination on the West Coast as a conference superintendent before being called to lead World Impact in 2013.

“My years at Sanctuary were some of the best of my professional life, but more and more I realized I had a heart for the church at large and a passion for helping urban pastors and churches in under-resourced communities,” Smith says. “The opportunity at World Impact has allowed me to be a pastor to pastors, to be able to serve the broader church in the USA and beyond.”

The father of two leads a staff of 287, including 110 missionaries, and fosters relationships with 350 church partners and 6,000 donors. World Impact’s camps reach 13,000 youth annually, its schools teach another 300 and its Urban Ministry Institute is developing 2,000 students around the world to become indigenous urban leaders.

The church, Smith says, needs to be a greater force of reconciliation, compassion and justice across the world, but it can only do so by increasing ministry efforts to reach the unreached.

“A lot of my time is spent teaching and preaching the biblical case for empowerment of the poor through the church,” he says. “The urban poor should play a significant role in the transformation of their own communities through evangelism, discipleship and leadership development.”

With World Impact locations across the nation and partnerships in 15 countries, Smith will continue to find the mission fields ripe for harvest.

“When I was at Luther Seminary, I always knew I had a heart for urban ministry, so I’m fortunate all these years later to be leading an organization that’s all about equipping the church and raising up leaders for transformation in under-resourced urban communities,” Smith says. 

Read about Efrem Smith’s impact at Minneapolis’ The Sanctuary Covenant Church at www.luthersem.edu/story/efrem09.
Humble growth
Jodi Houge, ’09, experiences change, growth and blessing in neighborhood congregation

By Samuel Chamberlain, M.A. Junior

**PASTOR JODI HOUGE DESCRIBES HUMBLE WALK LUTHERAN AS, “A CHURCH WHERE THE PEOPLE ARE.” Following where God nudges us, rooted in the middle of life.”**

Now in its seventh year, Humble Walk is the essence of a missional church, born and bred on the West End of Saint Paul, a neighborhood home to more than half the congregation.

Humble Walk has moved six times since its inception, which Houge describes as a positive thing because, “It places the congregation on the receiving side of hospitality and teaches us humility.” While locations have shifted, Humble Walk’s ministry is firmly rooted along Seventh Street, an urban thoroughfare less than a dozen blocks from downtown.

Houge, a sincere, caring person, regularly meeting with members at Claddagh Coffee. Yet, despite the constraints of leading such a dynamic, mission-oriented ministry, Humble Walk was able to support Houge with a sabbatical last year. She used the three months—funded by a Lilly Endowment grant—as a time to travel. “And when I returned,” she says, “Humble Walk had grown, and there were new faces at worship. Surely a good sign.”

Supported by a worship and arts coordinator as well as a seasonal camp coordinator, Houge says, “A lot of our members have multiple jobs or are students, and are tied down with many responsibilities. But they are able to help and lead when they can.”

For some, Humble Walk is extracurricular; a spiritual supplement since they are members of another congregation, but for others, Humble Walk is a “last grasp.” Giving church a final chance, hoping for the right Christian community, because at Humble Walk, there’s no “sneaky preaching,” says Houge. As the mission statement declares: “Small church. Big gospel. Enough grace to go around.”

As they look to the future, Humble Walk is always asking itself, “Who are we?” Praying for the grace to make room for one another in the community of Christ. “And as for the tie-dye,” Houge says, “Our church would close down if we stopped that event.”

**Shamrock’s Pub: Courtesy; Now: Samuel Chamberlain**

Shamrock’s Pub is the official second home for Humble Walk, and the initial draw for many of the 20- and 30-somethings visiting for the first time. Host to Hymns & Beer, Theology at the Bar and a storytelling event each spring, “through these programs we’ve met hundreds, maybe thousands,” Houge says. “Humble Walk doesn’t have a formal membership process. If you come to worship, or attend any other event, you’re a member with us.” Many come for the intimate feel, the safety of worshipping with smaller numbers in smaller, non-traditional spaces, like Sholom Home East, where they currently worship.

A missional church at its core, outreach is part of everything Humble Walk does, “often as if we’re on the edge of disaster,” laughs Jodi. Summer becomes time for Wild Things in the Park, an event that provides safe activities for youth—hula-hoops, bike rodeos and tie-dye. Last summer they incorporated community meals as a way of bringing the neighborhood together, partnering with local businesses to cater the food.

The challenge of being a neighborhood church is there’s no escaping the mission. “You take your dog for a walk twice a day and you’re bound to see people you know and people that know you as that pastor,” explains Jodi—a sincere, caring person, regularly meeting with members at Claddagh Coffee. Yet, despite the constraints of leading such a dynamic, mission-oriented ministry, Humble Walk was able to support Houge with a sabbatical last year. She used the three months—funded by a Lilly Endowment grant—as a time to travel. “And when I returned,” she says, “Humble Walk had grown, and there were new faces at worship. Surely a good sign.”

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To learn about Humble Walk’s humble beginnings, visit www.luthersem.edu/story/jodi09 and scroll down to Year 4.
Finding the relevant
Dan Shaw, ’02, redefines ministry in context

By Kelsey Holm, Marketing Communications Manager

THE LAST TIME WE CHECKED IN WITH DAN SHAW, ’02, HE WAS SERVING AS A U.S. MARINE CHAPLAIN AT AL ASAD AIR BASE IN WESTERN IRAQ. Now, nearly a decade later, Shaw is back on U.S. soil, pastoring Emmanuel Lutheran in Tacoma, Wash., and serving as a chaplain with a reserve Marine unit. Though he’s geographically thousands of miles away, he approaches ministry in remarkably similar ways.

“Here in Tacoma, 70 percent of the area is unchurched,” says Shaw, a husband and father of three. “But the vast majority are not hostile to Christianity; it’s just kind of irrelevant. It’s the same way in the military.”

In seminary, he was taught that people wouldn’t listen to a pastor who didn’t first establish a relationship with them; show them how much they were cared for. Shaw’s experience, though, has taught him that it’s sometimes the opposite.

“This is not like the book of Acts, where no one has heard of Jesus. They have a filter on Christianity. The work out here is to bust up those filters before I can talk to them about the gospel. Here, you have to have credibility with them before they’ll talk to you.”

The ability and willingness to flip the rules of pastoral procedure on their ear has served as a ministry survival tool for Shaw. When he was called into active duty with his reserve unit a few years after ordination, he didn’t land in Iraq and get handed the reigns of chaplaincy by another pastor. It was, by definition, a church plant.

“That ministry was beyond awesome. But if we’d have done your typical cultural Lutheran thing, it would have been me and two other guys there at church on Sunday,” Shaw says.

“I found a couple of Jesus guys excited about doing church and we grabbed whatever supplies we could get.”

This “straight up from scratch” ministry didn’t look like anyone’s definition of typical church, he says. All manner of denominations, as well as the unchurched, were represented. People gave testimonies—a very un-Lutheran thing. There was a gospel choir made up of mostly African-American Southern Baptists. When a parishioner from Shaw’s Kent, Wash., church sent, of all things, hundreds of cigars to the base, Shaw, a non-smoker, started Holy Smokes. The wildly successful gathering of Marines smoking cigars and reading their Bibles even led to a baptism. But Shaw’s theology, he says, was “straight up out of the Book of Concord.”

For Shaw, it was—and still is—about finding relevance and removing unnecessary barriers.

“Why should we have any other barriers than the gospel message itself?” Shaw asks. “You’re a sinner. You need saving. That’s the only barrier we want.”

That means removing the formality of traditional Lutheran church if that’s what Marines in Iraq—or parishioners in Tacoma—need.

“If we were starting a church in Saudi Arabia, a more ceremonial and formal culture, then maybe our church would look more formal and ceremonial,” he says. “But out here (in Tacoma) or with the Marines, they don’t know...

Relevant, continued on page 21

Read about Shaw’s 2007 deployment to Iraq at www.luthersem.edu/story/dan08.
Growing Daylight

An unlikely friendship leads to continued missional success

By Kelly O’Hara Dyer, Correspondent

WHEN NATHAN ROBERTS, ’12, AND MICHAEL KIMPUR FIRST MET AS COLLEGE STUDENTS IN 2006, IT SEEMED HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT THEY WOULD BECOME FAST FRIENDS, LET ALONE THAT THEIR FRIENDSHIP WOULD ONE DAY EXPAND INTO A THRIVING MINISTRY AND SCHOOL LOCATED IN KAPENGURIA, KENYA, AS WELL AS FORM THE BASIS FOR A BOOK THAT CHRONICLES THEIR LIVES.

The unlikely nature of that friendship starts with their backgrounds.

Roberts was raised in the affluent, primarily white suburb of Wayzata, Minn., attending a Missouri Synod Lutheran Church school across from the mansions of Lake Minnetonka. Kimpur grew up in a war-torn nomadic village in Kenya, working as a herd boy for the nomadic Pokot tribe.

While Roberts spent his childhood attending church functions in safety and tranquility as a child of privilege, Kimpur spent his days guarding cattle from warring tribesmen in the Rift Valley desert. After his cattle were stolen, the 8-year-old Kimpur walked 150 miles to a World Visions feeding camp, the start of a journey that would eventually give him the opportunity to attend school in Minnesota and then, in turn, travel back to Kenya once again.

After graduating from Bethel University with a Master of Arts in organizational leadership, Kimpur returned to Kenya in 2007. Discouraged by the poverty and violence he found there, he formed the nonprofit Daylight Center and School in 2008 to serve children who, like him, have been affected by the tribal violence in their villages. He asked his friend Roberts to help him get the school off the ground.

The story of Roberts’ and Kimpur’s bond and of the school that grew out of that friendship is detailed in “Poor Millionaires: The Village Boy Who Walked to the Western World and the American Boy Who Followed Him Home.”

In the book, the co-authors describe their early but highly divergent lives, their eventual meeting at Bethel University, and the joint efforts that led to the founding of Daylight.

Today, Roberts, who graduated from
Luther Seminary with a Master of Divinity, resides in Minnesota and serves as the children and family ministries director at First Lutheran Church of Columbia Heights. He remains a volunteer staff member for Daylight, coordinating U.S.-based fundraising for the school, and travels there for three weeks each year. Kimpur serves as the director of Daylight in Kenya.

“[In the past five years,] we’ve built two dormitories and we now also have a K-8 school,” Roberts says of the developments since Story last spoke with the two men. “This year, we’re building a clinic. We now have 12 acres of land; we have 100 kids in the dorms and 400 kids in the program, and we also have a day program with 100 kids in Michael’s home village. Every year we’ve built a new set of classrooms. We have a partnership with a Baptist church in Rochester and every year they go over to Kenya and build an 80-by-20-foot classroom or dormitory.”

With the success of Daylight, Roberts says that the challenges involved with conducting an on-the-ground ministry and educational effort in Kenya have evolved.

“It’s a growing ministry and in a lot of ways, we’ve been really blessed,” Roberts says. “We’ve had exponential growth in our first few years and it’s really starting to get big now. We had a $219,000 budget last year, and we have 25 staff people [there], but one of the things we really want is to have long-term staff. As teachers wait to get a government job, they spend a couple of years at Daylight, get a great reference and then move on. And we’ve realized that really can take a toll on our kids, to have temporary relationships like that. A lot of our kids have lost their parents, and the teachers take on the role of being almost like aunts and uncles. We’re really hoping to get to the point where we can offer competitive wages, to keep up that discipleship that starts between these kids and their teachers.”

Although Daylight serves a group of children who have often seen both immeasurable suffering and been orphaned by fighting in the region, Roberts says that the students have gone on to thrive at the school.

“We really infuse the gospel principles of loving your neighbor, and overcoming things like tribalism, which is this notion that people from a different region or different tribe are less than you or are not part of the real Kenya,” he says. “We really are assertive about overcoming those biases in our children. And we are actually one of the top performing schools in our area. There are about 150 schools in our district and ours is the third-ranking school.”

“Poor Millionaires” was published in April 2015. Roberts says the book was a way to document his and Kimpur’s story, and to share the lessons they’ve learned with a larger audience, including the children who attend Daylight.

“The book came about through just telling our stories to friends and family,” Roberts says. “A lot of people would ask, ‘How did you ever start a school in Kenya?!’ That was part of it, but another big part of it was that we wanted to have a resource for the kids at Daylight to hear their own story and to learn that this has come about because of Michael’s commitment to children and not him trying to get rich and famous. There are only a handful of people in his tribe who have the level of education that he does, and he’s had a lot of opportunities to pursue business or big government positions, but he’s decided to reach down instead of reach up.”

Roberts says the idea of him and Kimpur writing alternate chapters in the book was a conscious decision, to show their stories from both perspectives, and to also explain how they came to work together to start Daylight.

“My story may be a window into learning more about Michael’s story, especially for people in the U.S., although Michael’s friends say that his story helped them understand this crazy white guy,” Roberts say with a chuckle. “Our writing it together really helped people from both sides since the book goes back and forth. There are a lot of striking similarities for us: For instance, we both grew up ‘churching it up.’ I grew up in a little Missouri Synod Lutheran school, so I was in church every day, and Michael was raised by missionaries. Even though we both had very different contexts, we were drinking from the same well, spiritually.”

Today, Roberts is pursuing pastoral work closer to home, in addition to his volunteer duties at Daylight. He says his work at First Lutheran in Columbia Heights has in many ways been informed by his experiences working in Kenya.
“First Lutheran is in a first-ring suburb of Minneapolis, and it is kind of like a small town in the middle of the Cities,” Roberts says. “It’s an interesting place because the demographics have really changed over the last 20 years. It’s moved from being sort of a middle-class, working-class, Euro-American neighborhood to being a real multicultural neighborhood. Our local school is predominantly minority kids, Latino and African-American.

“A lot of [our success here] was really in applying some of the things I learned through Daylight,” Roberts says. “In Kenya, education is a real immediate need. So through meeting that immediate need with school, we have an opportunity to form young leaders as they’re being educated. I don’t know that the kids [in our area] say to themselves, ‘I want to spend my afternoons at church!’ Instead, what they’re thinking is, ‘You know what would be awesome? To play some basketball and get something to eat in the air conditioning!’ Since the church had this gym that really wasn’t being used very much, we basically opened it up for a couple of hours in the afternoon and kids started coming. Now, five years later, we’ve tripled the size of our children’s ministry, and on Tuesdays and Thursdays, we have between 40 and 50 kids here. Our Tuesday and Thursday numbers match what we have on Sunday mornings now. We’ve just had this really great transformation where the kids have gone from saying ‘my afterschool program’ to saying ‘my church.’”

Through both his work with Daylight and through his other post-seminary experiences, Roberts says the main lesson he’s learned is how important it is to truly hear the needs of his community, whether that be in Kenya or Columbia Heights.

“The main takeaway I’ve learned since leaving seminary is the importance of listening well in every ministry,” he says. “In the different ministries that I’ve been a part of, I really try to find the ‘immediate needs,’ and then preach the gospel as you meet those needs.”

To learn more about Daylight, visit www.daylightcenter.org. To read an excerpt from or order a copy of “Poor Millionaires,” visit www.poormillionaires.org.
In June 2010, Luther Seminary Doctor of Ministry graduate Betsy Miller, ’10, made history by being elected the first female president of the Provincial Elders’ Conference of the Moravian Church Northern Province. She says, “It has been a profound privilege to serve God and the Moravian Church in this capacity.” Her call in this leadership role has been full of the joys and challenges of doing God’s work in the world. “Perhaps the most rewarding part of this call is shaping the conversations about what God is up to in our local congregations and through the work we do together as a province,” she says. “I find joy in listening to stories of God’s work; the challenge is the need to keep reminding people that it is God’s mission, not ours.”

The Moravian church has wrestled with profound questions of being church in a changing world during Miller’s time as president. “The Moravian Church is living out a new imagination of being church together by a deliberate effort to start faith communities that do not look like church,” Miller explains, “such as a coffee shop where faith conversations happen every day, a café that blends Eucharist with healthy foods and a ‘pay-what-you-can’ model and a congregation that sold its building to move downtown to provide adult day services to the community. Time will tell how these incarnations of church will bless the world.”

Miller credits her Luther Seminary education for preparing her for this leadership position. “The D.Min. from Luther serves me through the language of the Missio Dei,” she says. “Thanks to the study and formation of my time at Luther, I have been able to influence the prevailing narrative of the province. I see congregations turning outward toward their neighborhoods, not with the primary goal of getting new members, but rather with the mission of partnering with God to be Good News among people in the community. This is a profound—and ongoing—shift and is a source of joy and hope.”

To read about how Betsy Miller’s education helped her lead, visit www.luthersem.edu/story/betsy06. You can read about her historic appointment within the Moravian Church at www.luthersem.edu/story/betsy11.
Open doors
Mikyoung Park, ’09, follows where God leads

By Samuel Chamberlain, M.A. Junior

WITH POISE AND OPTIMISM, MIKYOUNG PARK EXPLAINS, “GOD ALWAYS OPENS NEW DOORS. You can plan, plan, plan—and you should—but you never know where God will take you next.”

After earning her Master of Sacred Music degree from Luther Seminary in 2009, Park set her sights on even more theological education. She enrolled as a Master of Divinity (M.Div.) student, choosing to focus her studies on children, youth and family (CYF) ministry. As a CYF student, her mandatory work site was Redeemer Lutheran in north Minneapolis, which ended up being the perfect setting in which to combine her gift for music and love of theology. And, it was the place where all Park’s planning went straight out one of God’s open doors.

Park didn’t complete her M.Div. degree like she thought she would. But she did spend five years with Redeemer Music Arts Academy, teaching about 15 lessons each week to students otherwise unable to afford a musical education.

Around the same time, in 2011, Park and her husband, Joshua Choi, ’08, helped launch Mosaic United Methodist, a church in Brooklyn Center with a multicultural emphasis. Working together with people from many ethnic backgrounds, the ministry grew and took on a social mission—such as opening a neighborhood food shelf—though unfortunately after a couple years, they had to close due to financial struggles.

“While the conclusion of one ministry is hard,” she says, “it’s amazing what comes next, how God opens new doors.” Relationships at Mosaic led Park to Living Spirit United Methodist Church in suburban Minneapolis, where she currently serves as music director. Living Spirit grew with the merger of two

Open doors, continued on page 30

To read more about Luther Seminary’s role in the lives of Mikyoung Park and her family, visit www.luthersem.edu/story/mikyoung10.
Still called
Rob James, ’06, takes risks, partners with community to grow his congregation

By Clint Riese, Correspondent

PASTOR ROB JAMES, ’06, AND HIS CONGREGATION, GPS FAITH COMMUNITY, ARE USED TO BREAKING THE MOLD. Pastors fresh out of seminary aren’t supposed to lead new satellite congregations, yet 10 years later James’ Machesney Park, Ill., church is as strong as ever. Congregations aren’t supposed to worship in movie theaters, yet GPS did for five years—and then took over a former nightclub.

It’s safe to say James and GPS (“God’s People Serving”) have remained on the move since Story magazine featured them in 2009. GPS organized as its own ELCA church in 2010, relocated in 2011 after three land deals fell through, and recently cleared hurdles to add a second staff position as well as a pastoral intern.

A voracious student of mission development with an entrepreneurial spirit, James caught the seven-year itch in 2013 and found himself wondering if he had fulfilled his calling at GPS. A Lilly Endowment clergy renewal grant allowed James a sabbatical and GPS a consultant.

“It was a huge turning point,” the Luther College graduate says. “We started conversations about what we wanted to be, and they continued while I was off doing my own reflecting. When we came back together, it was great for me to be able to say, ‘If we’re focused on growing and we’re committed to doing new things and taking risks, then absolutely God is still calling me to this place.’ We believe we can be bigger.”

Where James once had to navigate branching a church off from an established congregation—including the dynamics of longtime parishioners expressing just what GPS should be—he now is learning how to minister to a new population: the unchurch.

“At the movie theater, visitors came because of personal invites and automatically connected into our community,” James says. “Now we have big signs and are on a main road, so pretty much every week we still get visitors who just walk in cold. If we don’t connect with them, they’ll walk out. A lot of them aren’t churched, so we can’t just use the same jargon and expect them to know all the stories we remember from Sunday school.”

Fittingly, the church’s theme this year is to foster connections. With GPS finally having a space of its own, and with a full-time family, children and youth ministry coordinator on board, James hopes to add weekday programming he feels has been the missing link.

“If we can figure out how to get a few things to click, I think we’ll grow really quick,” James says. “The ones in small-group studies and such are not going to leave. The ones who (leave) pop in, life gets busy and they’re gone.”

The mission field for GPS continues to extend beyond its walls. The congregation has a strong partnership with the public school system, and James jokes that he wishes the mayor didn’t have him on speed dial.

“How we’re invested in the community is different,” James says. “We go to the hard work of building relationships, taking risks and reaching out. We focus on partnering to be present in the community.”

James readily acknowledges that GPS is far from traditional; in fact he embraces it. It’s not about being unique,

Read about the beginning of GPS at www.luthersem.edu/story/rob09.
STORY MAGAZINE’S 2010 PROFILE OF ROSE MARY SÁNCHEZ-GUZMÁN CAME DURING A TIME OF STRUGGLE FOR THE EL PASO, TEXAS, PASTOR. Sitting just miles from the Mexican border, her church has long faced immigration-related challenges, and it often has also bordered on financial collapse. But a new threat had emerged: The state was considering following Arizona’s lead in making it illegal to aid undocumented immigrants.

“It was a hard time,” says Sánchez-Guzmán, ’96. “A lot of people left, and organizations in town struggled because it presented a choice: ‘If the law passes, what would I do?’ I thought about how I would be one they could arrest.”

The legislation never came to be, but after more than a dozen years leading Iglesia Luterana Cristo Rey, the daughter of two pastors found herself weary. She took sabbatical, gaining needed time to reflect.

“I was burned out,” she says. “Financials here are always a challenge, and I found out that piece was stressing me more than anything—not the ministry itself.”

Sánchez-Guzmán bounced back, creating community partnerships to make the financial situation more sustainable. It’s no small feat, considering half the congregation is undocumented, only six families make more than $15,000 per year and offerings average $1 per person. The native Bolivian also has taken uphill battles head-on, urging the community to fight stereotypes and working with the ELCA to help it understand how best to assist financially-strapped congregations.

“We need to continue the conversation on how to work with communities living in poverty,” she says.

Meanwhile, the congregation continues to live on the edge as federal legislation hangs in limbo after being challenged by many states. The Supreme Court this year will decide the legality of

To read our original story about Sánchez-Guzmán’s work in El Paso, visit www.luthersem.edu/story/RoseMary10.
the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, which since 2012 has provided temporary work permits and deferred deportation for certain immigrants.

“A lot of our members would’ve benefitted from DACA,” Sánchez-Guzmán says, noting that her congregation helped 150 youth apply. “The immigration situation was OK for some time, but it’s getting worse. Politicians just use the immigrants as a tool for their own benefit. We feel more hate now, and people are living in fear.”

The congregation is doing its part to build understanding. Its weeklong Border Immersion program gives high school, university and seminary students a one-of-a-kind education on the outcomes of what Sánchez-Guzmán calls a broken immigration system. Participants experience bilingual worship alongside immigrants, tour poverty-stricken areas of El Paso, visit legal aid organizations and meet with an immigration lawyer. The program caps with an unforgettable trip to the fence dividing El Paso and Juárez, Mexico, where Border Patrol agents present from one side and deported Iglesia Luterana members from the other.

While the immersion program is education-focused and balanced, Sánchez-Guzmán sees no choice but to help those who cross the border.

“The ones coming are hungry or fleeing violence,” she says. “As a person of faith, my understanding is there’s nothing illegal about looking for a better life for your family. God is a god of mercy and is with the poor and those in need. If we say we are his hands or his feet, we need to follow what we think he would do for those people.”

Sure of her calling, the mother of three is fueled by the work and as motivated as ever.

“People have been saying ‘When are you going to leave? You’ve been here a long time,’” Sánchez-Guzmán says. “As I get older, I see more meaning in what I do. I don’t have a problem being sure of what my call is, and I wouldn’t change it for anything. My spirit gets filled. We can’t save everybody, but if we choose what we can do, we can make a big difference.”

For more information on Iglesia Luterana Cristo Rey’s Border Immersion program, visit http://iglesiacristorey.wix.com/borderimmersion.
A world of perspective
Amanda Olson de Castillo carries ministry lessons from Guatemala to Minnesota

By Clint Riese, Correspondent

WHEN THEIR NEW PASTOR KEPT STUMBLING THROUGH THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION, MEMBERS OF ST. LUKE LUTHERAN CHURCH IN COTTAGE GROVE, MINN., HAD LITTLE CHOICE BUT TO FORGIVE AND FORGET. Pastor Amanda Olson de Castillo had a good excuse, after all: she had hardly ever recited the liturgy in English.

“My first few times at St. Luke, even with the words in front of me, I flipped into Spanish,” she says with a laugh. “They really had to put up with me in my sermons and everything.”

Today, Olson de Castillo, ’04, is well past the language adjustment as she digs in at Luther Memorial Church in South St. Paul, where she accepted a call as senior pastor in October. The return to her home state in 2013 followed a decade in Guatemala, which she began as a Luther Seminary Graduate Preaching Fellow before being commissioned as a missionary and ordained into the Augustinian Lutheran Church of Guatemala.

As chronicled in Story magazine in 2007, Olson de Castillo worked alongside her husband and father-in-law—a fellow minister and the church’s bishop, respectively—to mold the leadership and lay the structure for 17 congregations set anywhere from jungles to inner cities. The work was rewarding, as entire communities would join the church at once, but unrest and the need to let the local pastors “kick off the training wheels” set in motion a move to Minnesota.

“It was the right thing for the church and for us,” Olson de Castillo says. “We were called away so God could do something else there, and we came up here knowing he would provide.”

Still, the transition proved significant, especially with two children in tow.

“They left behind house and country and language and half their family,” Olson de Castillo says of her children, then ages 4 and 1. “There was a lot of culture shock for them, but we maintain. We speak Spanish at home and English everywhere else—the opposite of what we did in Guatemala.”

She went through candidacy with the ELCA for a second time, landing at St. Luke, while her husband, Horacio, enrolled at Luther Seminary. He was called to Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Oakdale last fall and will graduate in May. At Luther Seminary, he became involved with Agora, who has offices on the Luther campus and whose mission is to develop Christian leaders within ethnic communities.

Amanda also maintains ties to her former culture. She led bilingual vacation Bible school and plans to hold weekly Spanish activities in South St. Paul, where a quarter of the population is Latino.

Though physically far removed from their former life, Amanda and her family carry the perspective they gained from their experience.

“Here, we’re in a society where people wonder about the relevance of faith,” Olson de Castillo says. “You’d never have to have that conversation in Guatemala. They know faith is all they have and those are the promises they can trust and stand upon.

“I see things in a different way now, and I hope that is a gift to the church. We get caught up in a lot of first-world problems here instead of looking at why we are doing things. In the gospel, we have something to offer that the world really needs.”

You can read more about Amanda’s time in Guatemala at www.luthersem.edu/story/amanda07.
Luther Seminary explores how to lift every voice

The community gathered on Martin Luther King Jr. Day to honor his legacy. The theme was Lift Every Voice, focusing on racial tension, systemic injustice and the ways we can help raise silenced voices.

Nekima Levy-Pounds, award-winning professor of law at the University of St. Thomas School of Law, founding director of the Community Justice Project and President of the NAACP Minneapolis, gave a keynote address. Paul Slack, President of ISAIAH MN and Pastor of New Creation Church in Minneapolis, led worship, after which the community shared a meal. The event concluded with a panel discussion. If you were unable to attend, you can view the day’s sessions at youtube.com/lutherseminary.

To see pictures of the event, go to www.flickr.com/photos/lutherseminary. Select Albums, and then choose 2016 MLK Day.

Scholarship Weekend celebrates future leaders

In February, a group of 53 incoming students participated in Luther Seminary’s Scholarship Weekend. They interviewed with faculty, staff and students as part of the scholarship application process, attended classes and participated in conversations about life at Luther with current students. They had the chance to engage with other students, faculty and staff over dinner and during worship. Following the event, incoming students were awarded Presidential Scholarships (full-tuition awards), Leadership Scholarships, Wallace Scholarships and Trustee Scholarships. These scholarships are a tremendous help to students as they pursue their callings to serve as leaders in ministry.

To see photos from this event, go to www.flickr.com/photos/lutherseminary. Select Albums, and then choose 2016 Scholarship Weekend.

Mid-Winter Convocation discusses Martin Luther’s pastoral theology

On Feb. 1-3, Luther Seminary held its annual Mid-Winter Convocation. This year’s theme was Translating the Reformation: Martin Luther as Pastoral Theologian for Today and featured keynote speakers Robert Kolb, Timothy Wengert, Ron Rittgers and Mary Jane Haemig. Participants examined the ways in which Martin Luther’s theology of Scripture, prayer, confession, absolution and catechism remain relevant for ministry today. This year, Convo also featured the Andrew S. Burgess Lecture in Global Mission with guest speaker Elieshi Ayo Mungure.

You can see video of this event at youtube.com/lutherseminary. To see photos from this event, go to www.flickr.com/photos/lutherseminary. Select Albums, and then choose 2016 Mid-Winter Convocation.
## Events calendar

### 24th Festival of Homiletics
- **Prophetic Preaching in Times of Change**
- **May 16-20**
- Atlanta
- [www.festivalofhomiletics.com](http://www.festivalofhomiletics.com)

### 147th Commencement
- **May 22**
- Central Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
- [www.luthersem.edu/commencement](http://www.luthersem.edu/commencement)

### Stewardship series
- **June 16, July 21 and Aug. 18**
- Luther Seminary
- [www.luthersem.edu/stewlead](http://www.luthersem.edu/stewlead)

### Rethinking Sunday Morning
- **July 27-29**
- Luther Seminary
- [www.luthersem.edu/rethinking](http://www.luthersem.edu/rethinking)

### Working Preacher Presents:
The Craft of Preaching
- **Oct. 3-5**
- Luther Seminary
- [www.luthersem.edu/preaching](http://www.luthersem.edu/preaching)

### Singing the Faith
- A service of hymns and readings celebrating the Lutheran Reformation
- **Oct. 30**
- Luther Seminary
- [www.luthersem.edu/reffest](http://www.luthersem.edu/reffest)

### June
- **2** Narrative Lectionary Workday
- **7** Narrative Lectionary Study (webcast)
- **8-11** Children, Youth and Family Contemporary Issue Course: Neuropsychology and Children
- **10-12** The Book of Revelation
- **12-17** Mini-MBA for Pastors and Church Leaders
- **15-Dec. 31** Discerning God’s Mission: Trust Building and Collaborative Leadership for Collective Insight
- **27-30** School for Lay Ministry
- **28** Working Preacher Lectionary Study (webcast)
- **30** Rising Strong in Church Leadership

### July
- **6-8** Eight Keys for Thriving Faith Communities
- **11-15** Emotional Intelligence and Human Relations Skills

### August
- **1-5** Transforming Conflict From the Inside Out: Compassionate Communication in the Church
- **23-24** Stepping up to Staffing and Supervision of Church Staff

### LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

#### KAIROS 2016 Course Offerings

**Take your ministry to the next level with KAIROS!**

Continuing education opportunities for pastors, associates in ministry, diaconal ministers and lay leaders

See a complete list of offerings at [www.luthersem.edu/lifelonglearning](http://www.luthersem.edu/lifelonglearning)
Faculty and Staff Notes

Eric Barreto, associate professor of New Testament, was the Bible study leader for the PCUSA Conversation on Race, Ethnicity, Racism and Ethnocentricity, in Stony Point, N.Y. He was an invited panelist at the Bible, Empire and Reception History Conference at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Ga. He was an invited respondent for a panel on ethnicity in Luke-Acts and presented a paper, “Paul’s Path to (Legal) Citizenship,” at the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting in Atlanta. He presented “A People for God’s Name: Believing and Belonging in Luke-Acts,” at the Byberg Preaching Workshop in Cannon Beach, Ore. He also presented a lecture titled, “Where Do I Belong? Acts, Paul, and the Nurturing of Identity,” for the Princeton Lectures on Church, Youth and Culture at Princeton Theological Seminary. Effective July 1, Barreto will take up a new position at Princeton Theological Seminary as the Weyerhaeuser Associate Professor of New Testament.

Adam Copeland, director of stewardship leadership, presented a paper at a conference of the Center for Media, Religion and Culture at the University of Colorado-Boulder titled, “A Blogger of Valor: Gender and the Invitational Rhetoric of Rachel Held Evans’ ‘Week of Mutuality’ Series.” Copeland was the keynote speaker on the topic, Stewardship in a Digital Age, a symposium at the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary. He led a workshop on re-framing tithing at the NEXT Church conference, and preached at a number of congregations including St. James Lutheran in Crystal, Minn., and the First Presbyterian Church of Stillwater, Minn. He published the article, “Crowdfunding a New Church: A Multimodal Analysis of Faith-Related Giving Rhetoric on Indiegogo” in Online—Heidelberg Journal of Religions on the Internet.

Terri Elton, ’07, associate professor of leadership, was granted tenure, effective July 1.

Mary Jane Haemig, professor of church history and director of the Reformation Research Program, gave the annual Reformation Heritage lecture at Concordia University in St. Paul, Minn. It was titled, “Authentic Communication: Luther on Prayer, Praise and Thanksgiving.”

Mary Hess, professor of educational leadership and Chair of Leadership Development, was invited to serve for the coming academic year at St. Michael’s College of the University of Toronto. Her position there will be the Patrick and Barbara Keenan Visiting Chair in Religious Education for 2016-2017, in the faculty of theology.

Craig Koester, ’80, vice president of academic affairs and Asher O. and Carrie Nasby Chair of New Testament, participated in the Lutheran World Federation’s conference on Lutheran hermeneutics, held at the University of Aarhus in Denmark. His contribution centered on 1 Corinthians and its interpretation by Luther and in current global contexts. In November he presented a paper on “The Gospel of John as a Source for First-Century Judaism” at a conference at the McAfee School of Theology at Mercer University. He also organized and chaired a session on “Portraits of Jesus in the Gospel of John” at the meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature in Atlanta. He began serving as an associate editor of the Journal for the Study of the New Testament.

Karoline Lewis, ’94, associate professor of biblical preaching and the Marbury E. Anderson Chair of Biblical Preaching, led a group of students to visit and study in the Holy Land. She led the Mount Carmel Women’s Retreat in Milwaukee. Lewis was also the lead preacher and a workshop leader for the Walter Wangenin Preaching Series at the 2016 Institute of Liturgical Studies at Valparaiso University. She was a panel presenter at the Consultation for Common Texts in New York City.

Alvin Luedke, professor of rural ministry, presented at the Summer Theology Series in Circle of Faith Parish in southwestern Minnesota. The topic of the event was Backyard Mission, and the presentation was titled, “Wait, I BBQ and play with my kids (grandkids) in the backyard. That’s not a mission field ... is it?” He also presented at a rural ministry event sponsored by the Eastern and Western North Dakota Synods. The topic of the event was multiple-point parishes, and the presentation was titled, “Reformation of the Multipoint Parish Doesn’t Have to Be Scary!” Luedke presented a rural ministry workshop sponsored by the Northern Rockies Institute of Theology, Montana Synod. The title of the presentation was, “Faithful Leadership in Small Town and Rural (StAR) Ministry: Challenge and Promise.”

Dwight Zscheile, ’08, associate professor of congregational mission and leadership, was the keynote speaker for the Episcopal Diocese of Southwestern Virginia’s Annual Council. He led a clergy day for the Episcopal Diocese of Milwaukee and was keynote speaker for the Southwest Minnesota ELCA Synod Equipping Congregations Day. He also led a congregational innovation event for the Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina.

FACULTY PUBLICATIONS

Mark Granquist published “Scandinavian Pietists: Spiritual Writings from Nineteenth-Century Norway, Denmark, Sweden and Finland” (Paulist Press, 2015).

Craig Koester co-edited, with Kenneth Mtata, “To All the Nations; Lutheran Hermeneutics and the Gospel of Matthew” (Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2015).

Karoline Lewis published “SHE: Five Keys to Unlock the Power of Ministry” (Abingdon, 2016).

COMING SOON

Adam Copeland will speak at the conference, Rethinking Sunday Morning, July 27-29, at Luther Seminary.

Karoline Lewis will be present and emcee at the Festival of Homiletics in Atlanta, May 16-20. In June, she will lead a workshop at the Joe R. Engle Institute of Preaching at the Princeton Theological Seminary.

Dwight Zscheile will lead a clergy retreat for the Episcopal Diocese of Maine in May.

Do you want to invite a faculty or staff member to present in your congregation?
Visit www.luthersem.edu/resourceguide for up-to-date topic listings and contact information.
but about retaining vitality, and the father of two does his homework. One of his colleagues is Luther Seminary professor Terri Elton, who is using GPS as a subject for a research project on the changing face of ministry.

“A lot of established churches are trying to change their structure to match a world that’s more fluid,” James says. “We started out fluid and need more structure.

“Things have changed a lot in 10 years. I want to know what seminary students are learning that I never did. They will not believe that I made it through my first year of seminary without hearing the word ‘missional.’ Now they can’t make it through a class.”
Better Questions, Bolder Experiments

For many, it’s already happening. Whether Sunday morning finds them seated at work or in a coffee shop, in the bleachers or on a pew, they’re already rethinking churchgoing. And perhaps you are too.

But what is God up to in all of this? And to what more faithful future are Christian communities now being called? What are the practices of discipleship for a post-churchgoing world?

Join the conversation and discover the courage to ask some fresh questions and engage them more boldly.

July 27-29

#LSrethinking2016

www.luthersem.edu/rethinking
PRESENTS

The Craft of Preaching

SAVE THE DATE!
Oct. 3-5

www.luthersem.edu/preaching

2016 summer stewardship SERIES

The Story and Mission of Exodus Lending: What Talking About Money in Church Can Do
Jay Carlson, Pastor, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Minneapolis; and Meghan Olsen Biebighauser, Parish Organizer, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church

Propel: Good Stewardship and Greater Generosity
Clayton L. Smith, Executive Pastor of Generosity and the Church Foundation, Church of the Resurrection, Kansas City

Practicing Bad Stewardship: Jesus’ Reign and the End of White Supremacy
Drew G. I. Hart, Author of “Trouble I’ve Seen: Changing the Way the Church Views Racism”

Space is limited! Register today!

www.luthersem.edu/stewlead
Dokimazo

Spread the word | Oct. 9-10

Do you know a future church leader with gifts for ministry? Tell them about Dokimazo, a chance for those interested in Luther Seminary to join us on campus and learn more!

Dokimazo is a Greek word meaning “to test, to discern, to approve.” It’s our way of saying: “Come and see what God has in store for you.”

This two-day event will be held Sunday evening through Monday afternoon.

Prospective students will have the opportunity to:
• Hear others’ stories.
• Visit local churches and explore the Twin Cities community.
• Reflect on their own story and God’s call in their life.
• Learn more about Luther Seminary.
• Engage with faculty and current students.

RSVP online at www.luthersem.edu/dokimazo.

Churches—one black and one white. “We have a diverse background of congregants,” she said. “But the church is very open to all different kinds of music.”

Park has also worked with Global Mission Gathering with the ELCA, training musicians to domestically and internationally lead faith groups in worship. She has also worked with Agora and its director, Paul Erickson, who has an office on the Luther Seminary campus. Agora’s mission is to equip and empower lay people from ethnic-specific, multicultural congregations.

Park wasn’t the only one from her family to attend Luther—in fact, her family’s seminary legacy is a robust one. Her brother-in-law, JoonHyuk Lim, the first from her family to attend seminary, was commissioned into the Army as a chaplain shortly after ordination and was stationed in Fort Campbell, Ky., where he was deployed twice to Afghanistan with the 101st Airborne Division. Her other brother-in-law, Chongsun Kim, ’14, is awaiting a call in the St. Paul Synod. Park’s husband, Choi, completed his M.Div. and Master of Theology, and then felt called to teach. He has worked at a Montessori elementary school the past few years.

Park weaves what she learned as an M.Div. student into her ministry, and feels blessed to be evangelical, sharing her faith wherever God places her. At MacPhail Center for Music in downtown Minneapolis, she gives weekly voice and piano lessons to students ranging in age from 6 to 70. “Sometimes a simple question like, ‘How was your day?’ can lead to moments of prayer and reflection with my students,” she says. “Other times, getting to know a student means discovering their desire to sing in the choir or perform at church, which means helping students learn and rehearse just the right hymn for that occasion.”

Regularly continuing to draw on her theological education through music, she believes within each hymn there are deeper truths and inspiring ideas. As her students feel what stirs within each song, new life emanates. “It is transformative,” Park says. “You’re not just singing the text. You’re singing the faith.”

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Open doors, continued from 17
Student support crucial to Weidenbachs

“We became friends with Luther Seminary students when we worked and lived nearby,” said Don and Charleen Weidenbach. “We came to understand how crucial student support is and want to continue to support students as they follow their calls.”

They established the Charleen and Donald Weidenbach Endowed Scholarship Fund and the Simon and Alma Hanson Scholarship, using funds from a bequest from Charleen’s mother, to make their support concrete at Luther Seminary. In addition, they set up a charitable remainder trust to be sure they could achieve their charitable dreams beyond their lifetimes.

They appreciate the income from the trust, and the tax advantages of gifting appreciated assets to it. Because it’s a charitable remainder trust, they know that after their deaths the trust’s remainder will go to ministries about which they care deeply, including Luther Seminary. “We feel so gratified about having made these plans and being able to help!”

LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW YOU CAN HELP RAISE UP FUTURE CHURCH LEADERS.

For information about charitable remainder trusts and other legacy gifts contact:

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LUTHER SEMINARY
SCHOLARSHIPS make ministry happen

Scholarship support is critical for students following God’s call. It allows them to serve where they are needed most. Amanda Olson de Castillo, ’04, received a presidential scholarship while earning her M.Div. degree at Luther. She is now the senior pastor at Luther Memorial Church in South St. Paul, Minn. Amanda remembers with gratitude the financial support that helped her make ministry happen.

“I chose Luther Seminary for two main reasons. First, I knew that when I was ordained I would be asked if I could uphold the Lutheran Confessions. I wanted to make this promise faithfully and knew Luther’s education would help me do that. Second was my scholarship. It made it possible for me to fulfill my call and also be a faithful steward of my current and future financial resources.”

You can support pastors and church leaders like Amanda. Double your impact through the Seminarian Scholarship Challenge. Your gift to current scholarships will be matched 1:1 until June 30 or up to $200,000.

Make a current scholarship gift using the enclosed envelope or give online—and double your impact today!

Learn more about Amanda’s path to ministry on page 22!

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