



Conversations with our neighbors- we have them all the time!

### **Ministry Spotlight:** **Neighborhood Survey- How You Can Engage** by LaVerne Byas-Smith

Talk to anyone today? What did y'all speak about? See anything interesting while out and about? If you answer yes to any of these questions, you're prepared to complete one of our Vital Congregations Initiatives (VCI) Encounter Cards, part of our VCI Neighborhood Analysis. As part of the VCI program, which St. Andrews joined in 2021 and determined to see through to its conclusion, we are conducting our own congregation-led survey of the community we are a part of.

We're asking everyone to contribute to our Neighborhood Survey by occasionally writing down details of random encounters you have with neighbors and strangers; anyone you encounter in the community this summer up to Labor Day. There are two kinds of Encounters we're looking for: Observations and Conversations. Record a few details about the people and scenarios you witness in the community – your observations. Or, make note of some of the casual exchanges you have with people during your daily activities in the community – your conversations. We ask you to note details of these on Community Encounter Cards. Write on the short cards, just a dozen questions long, the details that were part of your natural encounter; leave the other lines blank.

## OBSERVATION

- Where are you located at the time of this observation? Henderson Park Playground
- Who do you see? What kinds of people? Large family? Grandma, Mom + Dad? 3 kids
- What activities are they engaged in? Watching Kids play on playground, eating sandwiches
- What, if anything, stands out about the person/people you have observed? Dad stood off to side not engaged with kids, smoked. Mom's nervous about little kid on playground equipment
- How might this person's experience be improved? A toddler structure.
- Who is missing? A grandpa?

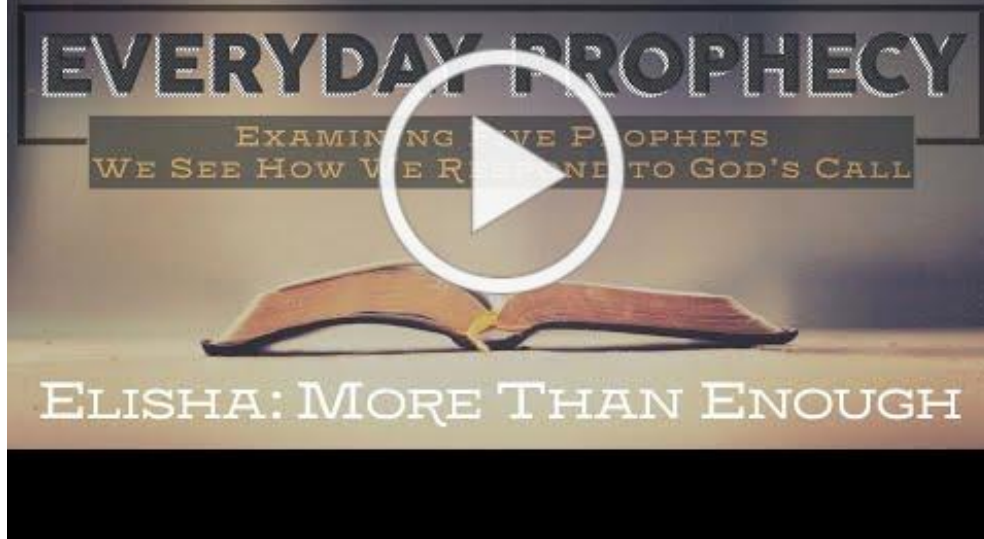
As the example card pictured here shows, this is not an assignment to proselytize, nor a church membership drive. You are not asked to share the Gospel with anyone...nor even to talk about Christianity. We do want details that tell us something about "who our neighbors are," "what do they like about their community?" "What do they wish was present in their community?" and like questions.

Why do we want this information? To get a greater sense of who are the people – their needs, their dreams, their experiences – God has placed in our sights, and in what ways are we, or might we be, of service to them.

Find the Encounter cards in the narthex along with an example of a completed card on the Usher's table. Or you can print out a card [here](#). Our goal is to collect at least 200 Encounter Cards by September 8th. We're keeping a running count on a tally board in the narthex. So, complete your share of Encounter cards today and drop them this Sunday in the "Neighborhood Encounter Cards Box" found in the Narthex, or drop them by the church office. We have collected a couple dozen cards to date. But, if everyone completes a few cards, we will soon reach our goal!

With our Neighborhood Survey we seek greater understanding of what constitutes our community, who are its people, and what ways we are in relationship with them. Designed to be experiential, it needs everyone's participation. We hope everyone participates in this effort to help us see all who live and work and play all around us – what our community is like TODAY.

In worship on July 28th we had a Minute for Ministry which included a funny and informative sketch. If you missed it, or would like to see it again, it takes place in the video below at minute 42.



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### From the Pastor:

Have you ever played the game *Bible or Shakespeare*? It's not the kind of game you can buy in a box. It's more of a DIY trivia game where players take turns throwing out famous quotes, and the other person must identify the source. Is it from the Bible or Shakespeare? It sounds easy enough. Give it a try (answers in footnote):

1. *"Vanity of vanities; all is vanity."*
2. *"To thine own self be true."*
3. *"All that glitters is not gold."*
4. *"Whoso findeth a wife, findeth a good thing." [1]*

While that's a fun game to play, it's harmless. The worst that can happen is that your favorite Bible nerd or English major might get embarrassed for missing an easy one. Unfortunately, there are plenty of other familiar sayings out there, attributed to Jesus or the Bible, that are not so harmless. They're the kind of statements usually said with good intentions, like "God never gives you more than you can handle." However, these statements are problematic, inaccurate, and not fully Christian, if we stop to think about what we are saying.

Several years ago, United Methodist Pastor Adam Hamilton wrote a book called *Half Truths: God Helps Those Who Help Themselves and Other Things the Bible Doesn't Say* to address these kinds of statements. I think the former Potpourri Sunday School class studied Hamilton's book when it came out. In a world full of fake news, AI (Artificial Intelligence) trickery, and wild, unfounded statements that quickly spread as facts, it can be hard to tell truth from untruth. We may find ourselves repeating Christian-sounding sentiments when we don't know what else to say, when in reality, not only did Jesus never say those things, but he said something to the contrary.



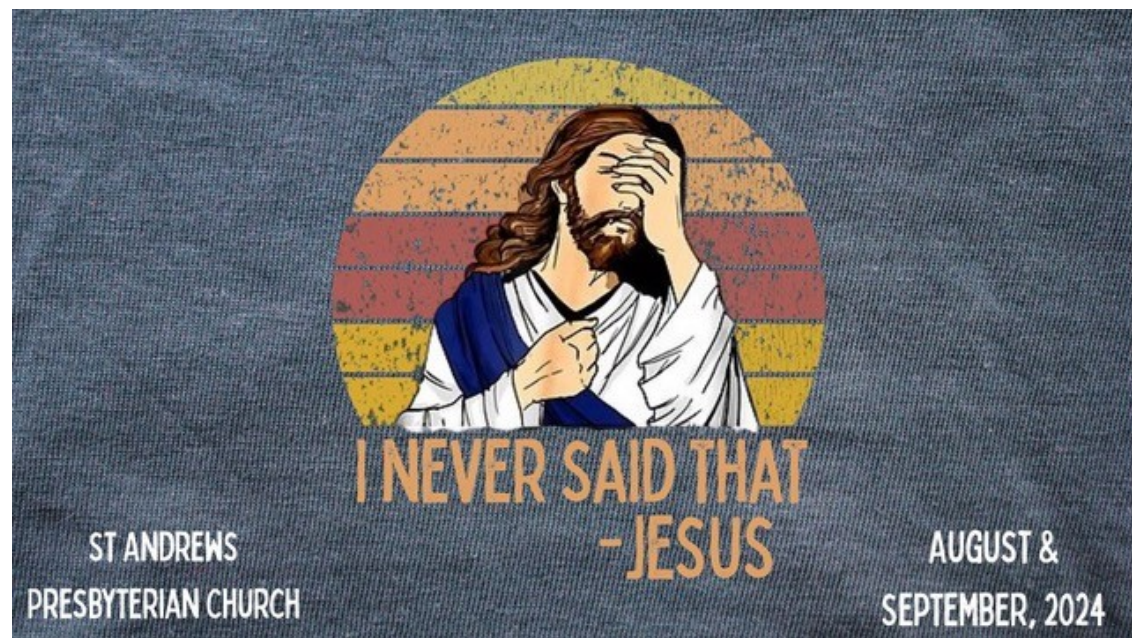
On August 11th, we'll begin a new sermon series: "I never said that. -Jesus." It's about some of these common sayings that contain half-truths and misconceptions about God's Word. The purpose is not just to fact-check but to better understand what Jesus said and taught. We've all heard these words. We've probably even said some of them. The point is not to shame or judge the people who use them. They do capture some element of the truth. However, these sayings also miss the point in significant ways.

Over eight weeks, we will break down the things we might misattribute to Jesus and look at what he *did* say instead. We will also continue our tradition of holding a hymn sing on the Sunday of Labor Day weekend. The theme for this year's hymn sing will be "I *did* say that!" —singing hymns based on the words of Jesus.

I hope you'll join us for this series and invite a friend, co-worker, or neighbor to come and visit, too!

-Camille

[1] 1) Ecclesiastes 1:2; 2) Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, Act I, scene iii, 78-82; 3) Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*, Act II, scene vii; 4) Proverbs 18:22



## Sermon Series: I Never Said That -Jesus

August 11	<i>Everything Happens for a Reason</i>
August 18	<i>God Helps Those Who Help Themselves</i>
August 25	<i>Follow Your Heart</i>
September 1	Hymn Sing — <i>I DID say that!</i>
September 8	<i>Money is the Root of All Evil</i>
September 15	<i>God Won't Give You More Than You Can Handle</i>
September 22	<i>God Said It, You Should Believe It, That Settles It</i>
September 29	<i>Love the Sinner, Hate the Sin</i>

# St. Andrews Back-to-School Carnival



Bounce Houses

Crafts

Yard Games



Petting Zoo

Hot Dogs

and more!

August 10  
10a-1p

St. Andrews Presbyterian Church  
4882 Lavista Road, Tucker, GA

## It's Back-To-School Carnival Time at St. Andrews

by LaVerne Byas-Smith

Antsy toddlers wait for their turn to pet baby chicks and tiny goats, while another tot beams perched in the cab of DCFD Fire Engine. These are the first scenes you'll likely take in as you enter the grounds of this year's Back-to-School Carnival, Saturday, August 10th. Screams of delight will pour from the bouncy houses – one for the big kids, another smaller version for preschoolers. And the St. Andrews registration volunteers will anxiously welcome a steady flow of young families and school kids from our parking lot beside Tucker Recreation Center toward the front of the church along Lavista Road where many of the Carnival activities takes place. Everyone will be greeted at the registration table with smiles and tickets for the free hot dog lunch – one for every member of the family. As in every past St. Andrews Carnival, everything at the Back-to-School Carnival – with one lone exception, the tasty but costly designer popsicles -- is Free: the games, the crafts, Storytime, the hot dog meal, and even the samples of traditional food prepared on site by St. Andrews' partner congregation, Cristo Para Todas Las Naciones.

Last year's Carnival welcomed over 350 guests. One of them was my three-year-old grandson, Tatum along with his parents, who enjoyed a few hours of fun activity, ate lunch and left just in time for naptime. It's not clear who was happier. They plan to return this year. And St. Andrews hopes they do – expecting an even bigger crowd this year as more people become aware of our free, end-of-summer celebration.

There are new crafts and exhibits in the works for this year's Carnival. Mother-daughter team, Debbie Brilling and Samantha Downton, are dreaming up new take-home crafts to delight our guests. And representatives from LifeLine Animal Shelter will have information about life-saving animal adoptions in DeKalb County.

Besides the popular bouncy houses, we'll again have our favorite

activities like lawn games – corn hole, hula hoops, Jenga and giant tic-tac-toe. Returning craft activities include face painting, spin art and temporary tattoos hosted by youth Lily Powell and Coco Perkins alongside other church members, Mary O'Brien, Leigh Ann Millican and Mitzi Hoffman; and cupcake decorating led by our Building Families representative Sheree Wyatt. We'll again serve free freshly popped popcorn; but this year we'll also have snow cones!

One very popular event from last year was the Storytime Corner. Held every half hour in an alcove inside the church, Storytime was especially popular with the littlest guests; for the parents it became a moment to rest and catch some cool air. At the end of the half hour, the little listeners were thrilled to hear the invitation to choose a free book to take home. My grandson made a beeline for the gently used dinosaur encyclopedia, proudly taking it to his mother to hold for the rest of the Carnival. I hope they have a book about trucks this year – that's his latest thing. Church members, Phyllis Bearden and Bernadette Angelo return this year, joined by Pat Baker, as the Storytime readers.

St. Andrews' Back-to-School Carnival, August 10th from 10:00 am – 1:00 pm, is our gift to the community, a way to extend welcome and blessings to our neighbors in Tucker and other nearby communities. There's still an opportunity for you to help out with this year's carnival, by [signing up here](#).

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## Treasurer's Report

Jane Thomas, Treasurer

In June our income was \$40,030, and our expenses totaled \$39,749. Year to date, our income is \$205,426 and expenses are \$227,280. So, we are in the red by \$21,854.

## SAPC Staff

### Pastor

Rev. Dr. Camille LeBron Powell (ext 106)  
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LaVerne Byas-Smith (ext 109)  
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### Director of Older Adult and Caregiver Ministries

Pat Baker (ext 111)  
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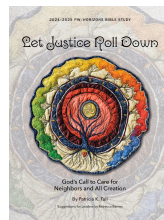
### Director of St. Andrews School

Lounette Bruce (ext 120)

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## Presbyterian Women

The PW are getting ready for their new study *Let Justice Roll Down* by Patricia K.



Tull Please [contact Mary O'Brien](#) if you would like to order a copy of the book. All of the women of St. Andrews are invited! [Contact Judy Cook](#) with any questions about the Presbyterian Women. Meetings will be held on the Third



Tuesday of the month, in the Meeting Room and on Zoom, at 10:00 a.m. with the first meeting on September 17. We hope to see you there!

[sasdirector@sapctucker.org](mailto:sasdirector@sapctucker.org)

#### Office Manager

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#### Financial Administrator

Helen Hoang (ext 104)  
[finance@sapctucker.org](mailto:finance@sapctucker.org)

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## Hearing Loss Information Session

St. Andrews is hosting an informational session about hearing loss given by Dr. Alexa Todd from the Auditory Verbal Center. This event will take place in the Youth Room on Wednesday, August 28th at 6:00 p.m. Everyone is welcome to attend and to invite a friend or neighbor to attend. Contact Pat Baker with any questions, [pat@sapctucker.org](mailto:pat@sapctucker.org).

*"We hear with our ears. We have been taught that since we were young, but is that true? More and more research is showing we don't hear with our ears, but our brain. Hearing is important for brain health. How do we keep our hearing healthy? What technology is being developed for hearing issues? What is hidden hearing loss? Please come loaded with questions as we delve into a sense many take for granted. Learn more about something you only think you know!"*

Alexa Todd, Au.D., CCC-A, F-AAA  
Doctor of Audiology

[Visit our website](#)

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## Giving

Online giving applies to your pledge just the same as a paper check. Secure online contributions can be made by clicking [this link](#), or checks can be mailed to: SAPC, 4882 Lavista Rd, Tucker, GA 30084

**GIVE NOW**

through the Presbyterian Mission Exchange



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## Back-to School collection for NETWorks

Thank you to everyone who brought school supplies for NETWorks Good Neighbor Back-to-School event! As you can see we had a generous trunkful of supplies to bring to NETWorks to help our neighbors.

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## Lunch and Learn Returns August 7th

All are invited to join us on Zoom from 12:30-1:30 PM each Wednesday to connect with your church family and for scripture discussion. Pastor Camille usually begins with a prompt to start the

groups with some sharing that may or may not connect with the texts for the day. Most of the time is spent exploring the scripture passages that will be the focus of the following Sunday's worship. We close with a time of sharing joys and concerns and prayer. There's no commitment and no homework required. Look for details and a link in an email each Wednesday morning and in our weekly email.

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## Flowers for Worship

If you would like to bring flowers for Worship, [Click here](#) to sign up. The flowers can be from your yard or the store.

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## Older Adult and Caregiver Ministries- Summer Events

by Pat Baker

### OACM Day Trip

Our day trip to the Center for Civil and Human Rights last month was a great success. [Pictured above] 16 members and friends gathered for tacos at Tin Lizzies and headed over to the Center; the format is like a museum with immersive experiences. It was a thoughtful and moving event for many on the trip. Stay tuned for more day trip opportunities in the fall!

### Balance Class

We've had a great response to the *A Matter of Balance Classes* with 16 members and friends of members attending. This topic is REALLY important for all ages, it just takes one time of not paying attention to your surroundings, etc. that can cause someone to fall and experience



an injury. We are practicing four types of exercise- 1) endurance, 2) strength, 3) balance and 4) flexibility. Even the members of the class who exercise on a regular basis are learning a lot. The OAC Ministries is considering holding another class next Spring.

Prayers for Caregivers  
by Patti Normile

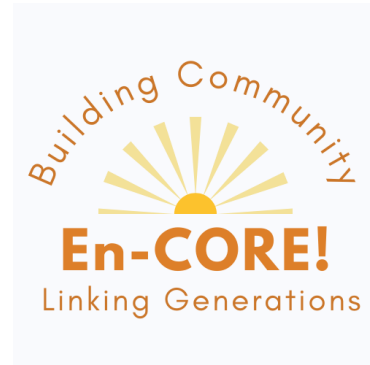
#### DECISIONS

My life seems threatened by an avalanche of decisions, Lord.  
By rights these choices don't even seem to be mine to make.  
My mom and dad always encouraged me to make my own choices.  
Now I am forced to make some major ones for them.  
Where can Dad be cared for? Can Mom bear to be away from him?  
To sell or not to sell the house that has been their home for more than 50 years---  
*If* we don't, where will the money come from to care for them?  
*If* we do, will the loss of that old place take a final toll on them?  
I ask them what they think will be best.  
The answer is a tear-filled eye, a shoulder shrug or "You know what's best."  
I have a feeling that no answer will be totally right.  
Help me, Lord, to find solutions that are the best!

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### Calling on New “EN-CORE” Volunteers for the new School Year

“En-CORE,” a St. Andrews’ ministry dedicated to serving St. Andrews School’s (SAS) faculty, families and students, seeks new church volunteers to join its 2024-25 “Core.” We completed our first year of service having weekly delighted the kids at Storytime, and monthly with Music Class. We engaged and served school parents at the Halloween Parade reception and the Family Thanksgiving meal. And we encouraged the faculty and staff with gifts provided by you, St. Andrews Church, of new equipment and toys selected from their wish list. Our final project helped them pack, move, and unpack the school library at the end of the school year. It was a great inaugural year.



As school starts August 5th, En-Core volunteers are again scheduling Friday Storytimes, and this year Music Class twice-a-month. But we really need NEW READERS and more Music Class helpers. Won't you pray about giving an hour or two per week, or even an occasional hour or two a month, to help encourage our SAS school family? En-Core really needs YOU.

We've planned exciting new volunteer opportunities for the Fall. Short-staffed, the school office needs phone and clerical help. We would love to provide an office volunteer one day a week. And our big "secret" project involves music, costumes and holiday cheer. We won't give it away, but we'll need more volunteers for Music Class and ancillary support roles to pull off this end-of-fall-semester En-Core-

SAPC-SAS production. We're very excited to pursue this big project, but WE NEED YOU to join us NOW for it to happen.

Through the ministry of En-CORE, SAPC might nurture a deeper relationship with the SAS community and families while fulfilling our mission "to love God by being good neighbors." Our closest neighbors are right here at SAS learning and growing on our campus every week day.

If you'd like to join or learn more about St. Andrews' Encouragement Core, En-CORE, contact LaVerne Byas-Smith, Coordinator of Congregational Vitality at [laverne@sapctucker.org](mailto:laverne@sapctucker.org), or call 678-429-0411.

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## Fidelis Sunday School Class

Everyone is welcome to join the Fidelis Sunday School Class, which meets at 9:00 am on Sunday mornings in the Library, and on Zoom (password fidelis).

The class uses *The Present Word* series of books. This Summer, the study theme is "Hope in the Lord" and in August the focus is Eternal Hope. Contact Deanna Hall for more information.

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## Clifton Sanctuary Ministries



There are spots available for upcoming dates to bring food to Clifton. For more information or to sign up, [click here](#). This ministry is a very easy thing to do while maintaining your social distancing since meals are dropped off on Clifton's front porch after calling ahead to let them know when you are coming.

A group gathers on the 4th Sunday of each month after worship to make lunches for Clifton. If you are interested in helping, contact Phyllis Bearden.

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## August Birthdays

1 Pat Blair  
2 Elena Weaver  
8 Gretchen Turner  
12 Nathan Phillips  
25 Charles Mills, Susan Williams  
27 Patsy Cannon

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## August Anniversaries

9 Jimmie & John Artley  
26 Gloria & Bob Williams

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## Revelation Bible Study

We are going through Revelation verse by verse. Please join us in the youth room Sundays at 2:00 pm in the Youth Room as we delve deeper into the material by Bruce Gore, facilitated by Arch Baker. Everyone is welcome!

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## Tucker First UMC Shower Ministry

Sunday afternoons our neighboring congregation opens their doors to the unhoused in our community. They offer showers, laungrgy service, and a meal. Click [this link](#) for more information and click [here](#) to sign up to help.

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## Upcoming Elections

*Our congregation feeds the men at Clifton Sanctuary Ministries on the fourth Sunday of every month.*

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Just in case you haven't heard, it's an election year. [Click this link](#) to go to the My Georgia Voter site where you can register to vote, check your voter registration, polling place location, request a mail-in ballot, and more.

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## PDA: Disaster Relief and More

Did you know that Presbyterian Disaster Assistance responds to more than just tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, fires, and floods? They also aid refugees and asylum seekers, as well as respond to incidents of public violence, like mass shootings.

When you are not sure what to do besides offering thoughts and prayers, supporting PDA is a way to do more. [Click here](#) to contribute directly to their efforts. To send a check, please designate where you want your gift to go on the memo line and mail to the following address:

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  
P.O. Box 643700  
Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700

The code to designate gifts to the humanitarian response in Ukraine is DR000165.

The code to donate to hurricane relief, including Hurricane Ian, is DR000194

### To Donate:

Call 800-872-3283

[Click here](#) to donate online

Text 'PDA' to 20222 to donate \$10

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