A Radically New New Year’s Resolution
by Pat Latus-Kennedy-CALL Instructor

Several years ago, I stumbled upon an old journal of mine. Of course, there was an entry for New Year’s Eve. When I read the resolutions I had written, I chuckled to myself and felt silly at the familiarity of the comments written there. It was typical, and sounded something like: “Lose 10 lbs,” “Eat better,” and “Get into shape.” Vague and meaningless resolutions. I’m sure that if I had followed my journey through the year I would have discovered that the resolutions were short-lived.

Perhaps you’ve had similar New Year’s experiences. And perhaps you have made similar resolutions (with good intentions, of course!) to make lasting change, only to find that as the days and weeks go by, the excitement and enthusiasm for your resolutions fades.

I love this time of year. I love the sense of challenge and newness that the New Year offers us.

This year, what would happen if instead of focusing on physical health, you were to focus on your mental and emotional health?

As the years have progressed, I’ve come to understand some important concepts related to the human brain. One of these concepts is that the human brain has an amazing capacity to change throughout our lifetime. This is true because our brain continues to make new neural connections even as we age and despite disease and injury. This is known as neuroplasticity.

Recent research shows that we can use neuroplasticity to change our mental mindset by focusing on gratitude and those aspects of our lives that bring us happiness. When we focus on these areas of our lives, we’re building and strengthening not only the neural pathways associated with feeling happier, we’re actually increasing several chemicals connected with happiness.

In her book: *Habits of a Happy Brain: Retrain Your Brain to Boost Your Serotonin, Dopamine, Oxytocin and Endorphin Levels*, Loretta Graziano Breuning, PhD. offers insights on how to train our brains to bring lasting positive change into our lives. She states that four chemicals play a particularly important role in helping us experience happiness in our everyday life. The first is dopamine. Dopamine is a neurotransmitter associated with reward and pleasure, and produces joy when we find things that meet our needs. When we’re hungry and we find and eat food, dopamine surges through our bodies.

The second, endorphins, help us ignore and block pain. This hormone helps athletes when they are injured to continue to perform, despite pain. It can also play a role in helping us if we’ve been injured to block the pain until help arrives.

Oxytocin, often referred to as the love hormone, plays a role when we fall in love, hug family and friends, and in parent-child bonding.
Lastly, serotonin helps regulate mood and social behavior. It produces the feeling of pride when we experience approval from others. When we receive praise and recognition from friends and colleagues for a job well done, serotonin is released throughout our bodies.

When we allow ourselves to relish those moments of peace, gratitude, and happiness in our lives, we’re not only strengthening or creating new neural connections, we’re allowing our body to experience surges of these feel-good chemicals. And the more we do this type of work, the stronger the connections in the brain.

So, how to begin this life-altering work? I stumbled upon this work during a particularly difficult time in my life. I started by reading about the brain, neuroplasticity, and happiness. I took classes and went to professional development opportunities that reinforced these concepts. I watched TED talks related to these topics. I found a good therapist. I created a mindfulness practice. I became trained in a body-centered, mindfulness-based form of psychotherapy, called Hakomi. All of these experiences enriched my life in countless ways.

It would be unreasonable to expect that your New Year’s resolution would be as intensive as what I’m suggesting here. So here are some simple suggestions: Start small. Chose one book that will help you understand your brain better. I recommend *Mindsight* by Daniel Siegel as a good starting place. Take time in your day to be mindful of all of the things you are grateful for in your life. Upload mindfulness practices that focus on gratitude. Take CALL courses that focus on mental emotional well-being (Hint: I teach CALL classes that often teach on these themes).

Research says that it takes 45 days to change a habit. Perhaps your New Year will allow you to commit to a resolution that offers you peace, happiness, and opportunities for lasting, positive change. I hope that by reading this you will feel inspired to dedicate yourself to discovering a “Radically New” New Year’s resolution. Happy 2019!

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**Public Events**

**Bob DeBruin, Chair**

We welcome our third passport film of the season on Wednesday, February 27, at 7:00 pm, in the Covenant Fine Arts Center. The film is titled *Cuba’s Secret Side* by cinematographer Karin Muller.

There’s a side of Cuba you’ve seen before and a side you haven’t. Known for her fearless curiosity, adventure filmmaker and author Karin Muller hitchhiked around Cuba for three months, living with fishermen and farmers, country doctors and a Santeria priestess.

She was arrested over a dozen times, but in the end, she managed to get beyond the propaganda and rhetoric to capture the true character of the Cuban people. Viewers see the soul of Cuba, including life on the black market, hitchhiking protocol, slums, rock concerts, 50-year-old car repair, and a stunning end to an explosive festival. *Cuba’s Secret Side* is an entertaining, insightful, and often humorous look at a side of Cuba that few foreigners are allowed to see. Although unavailable to join us in person, Karin will join us live by skype the night of the film. We offered this setup style two years ago when we first introduced Karin to our audience with a film on a Sudanese refugee camp and the evening was a great success. The cost for single tickets is $6. Guests can order by calling the box office at 526-6282, after 10:30am, Monday through Friday. You can also buy tickets the evening of the show and the box office opens at 6:00 pm. All seats are reserved.

We recommend parking across the Beltline and using the crosswalk to cross the road. The distance is shorter and easier than you would expect. *(cont., pg 3)*
Public Events,
Bob DeBruin, Chair

The Noontime spring lectures are Thursdays at noon. All lectures are without charge and open to CALL members, the public, Calvin faculty, staff, and students, and your friends. The location for this spring’s lectures changes many times, so please take special note of the different venues.

Our lecture series opens with The Life and Work of Artist John Swanson on Thursday, February 14 (Valentine’s Day), at noon at the Woodlawn Ministry Center. The church is located on the south side of Burton Street, across the street from the Calvin campus Burton St. entrance. Some parking is available at Woodlawn and overflow parking is possible in lot #1 on the Calvin campus.

The lecture is presented by Larry Gerbens on the art of John Swanson. John August Swanson is the world’s pre-eminent serigraph (silkscreen) artist. His beautiful and narrative works of art hang in many West Michigan homes, churches, and institutions (including Calvin College), and have been collected by international patrons including the Vatican. We will explore Mr. Swanson’s life and work using the Bergsma Collection of 45 pieces, including seven originals.

Our second lecture is Thursday, February 28, at the Calvin Chapel. Douglas Cupery, Church Mobilization Director for Crossroads Prison Ministries, presents a lecture titled I Was in Prison and You Visited Me.

Often hidden and not talked about, the prisoner is forgotten by society. We assume once a person is convicted, sentenced, and incarcerated, that the problem is taken care of. Yet the story of the prisoner does not, nor should not, end there. The story of the prisoner has profound effects in our community and within our families. Jesus says that when we visit the prisoner we visit Him. If this is true, shouldn’t we be lining up and pounding on the prison doors to let us in? Yet often, we as the Church are often silent in speaking into the punishment, refinement, and restoration of the prisoner. This talk will cover the scope of incarceration and what our role as the church is within this.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Venue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14-Feb</td>
<td>Larry Gerbens</td>
<td>The Life and Work of Artist John Swanson</td>
<td>Woodlawn Ministry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28-Feb</td>
<td>Douglas Cupery</td>
<td>I Was in Prison and You Visited Me</td>
<td>Calvin Chapel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-Mar</td>
<td>Jason Googins</td>
<td>What’s Buzzing All Year</td>
<td>Center Art Gallery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28-Mar</td>
<td>Bert DeVries</td>
<td>Reactivation of Ancient Water Systems in Jordan</td>
<td>Bytwerk Theatre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-Apr</td>
<td>Suzanne McDonald</td>
<td>Holy Saturday: Insights from a Neglected Day in Holy Week</td>
<td>Calvin Chapel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Announcements
by Sonja DeJong, CALL Program Manager

56 Spring Courses!
Registration for spring courses opened Friday, January 4, and just 48 hours later, our registration count had reached nearly 500 seats filled for classes.

Here are some of the courses receiving the most attention:

#2-What Happens When We Die
#3-Sense and Non-Sense
#18-The First Century
#25-The Music of the Beatles
#34-Justice, Why it Matters
#36-Evangelical Protestantism
#44-Violence in the Bible
#45-Early America
#48-Rise of Fascism After WWII
#51-Into and Out of the Land
#54-Rubens to Rembrandt
#56-Fridays at the Movies

It’s never too early to solicit ideas for future courses in the CALL program. Do you have a strong interest in an author, topic, or current event course? We welcome your feedback on suggestions, along with a person who could instruct the course. Any proposals can be emailed to call@calvin.edu. A fall 2019 list of curriculum possibilities is already underway.

We are thankful that many CALL students are experiencing fewer problems with the new software program we implemented in July. If you are experiencing any problems at all, call 526-8777 and we would be more than happy to assist. CALL offers ½ year membership pricing, effective January 1, for the lower price of $30. If you know anyone interested in lifelong learning, we encourage you to give them our phone number or website address to receive information about our program.

A video tutorial is available on our main web page for anyone needing additional instructions on purchasing a membership.

Additional Dates
The following are dates of trips, events, and classes in the future:

Events:
- April 11, Peter and the Starcatcher Play by Calvin Theatre
- May 22, Midland Michigan Daytrip
- and a June Detroit Tigers Ballgame

Classes:
- June 3-13 Summer Courses

Extended Trips:
- Stratford-June 2019
- China-October 2019
- Hawaii- January 2020
- Israel- March 2020
- Italy and Dante- May 2020
- Netherlands-October 2020
- Vietnam/Cambodia- November 2020

Email us at call@calvin.edu to be added to any Extended Trips interest lists. Be the first to receive travel brochures once available.
Member Events
Amy Shellenbarger, Chair

Love Thy Neighbor Interfaith Tour

Friday, March 15, 9:00 am

Back by popular demand! Last year, we spent a day getting to know the Buddhist, Jewish and Muslim members of our community and how they worship. This year, we’ll have the chance to visit a Hindu Temple and a different Islamic Mosque.

 Spend a day getting to know about the Hindu and Muslim members of our community and how they practice their faith. The bus will depart at 9:30 a.m. from the Prince Conference Center and make our first stop at the West Michigan Hindu Temple on Whitneyville Avenue in Ada, where our host, Fred Stella, will provide an overview of the Hindu faith and the differences between Christianity and Hindu. We will then tour the beautiful temple. Please note, you will be asked to remove your shoes before entering the Temple and the floors may be chilly, so wear or bring a thick pair of socks.

At noon, we'll board the bus for a trip to the first mosque established in Grand Rapids, the Islamic Center and Mosque on Burton Street. At the Mosque, we'll enjoy a buffet lunch, featuring a selection of typical Middle Eastern food, including baklava for dessert. Our host, Dr. Sahibzada, the Director/Imam, will provide us with an overview of the Islamic faith and invite us to observe the 2:00 pm prayer service. For the prayer service, you will be asked to remove your shoes. In addition, women should bring a head covering and be sure to wear clothes that cover arms and legs for the prayer service.

We'll arrive back at the Prince Conference Center about 3:00 p.m. with a renewed understanding of how other members of our community practice their faith.

Cost is $45.00 per person. For questions, email Amy at amyshellenbarger@gmail.com or phone the CALL office.

Member Events Registration

Two ways to register:

1. Online: www.calvin.edu/CALL > My Account>Semester drop-down tab> Event Registration-Fall and Spring 2018-2019
2. Complete this form (make checks payable to CALL) and send to CALL, Youngsma Center, 3201 Burton St. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546. Event fees are per person. CALL will notify you if an event has filled. A reminder is sent two weeks before the event.

☐ Friday, March 15

Love Thy Neighbor Interfaith Tour

$45

Name (s): ____________________________________________
Phone: ____________________________________________
Confirm by email?  ☐ Yes  ☐ No, I don’t use email
Extended Trips
by John Apol, Chair

2019 Destinations
Southeast Spain still has two spots available for the dates of March 14-24, 2019. The cost is $4,344 per person from Grand Rapids, based on double occupancy. Thirteen participants are registered to date. Travelers will journey with Calvin Spanish professor Cynthia Slagter to some of the best sites in Southeast Spain.

On your journey through Southeast Spain, you’ll see Payoyo cheese being made, taste a variety of Sherry wines, watch a flamenco show, go to an olive oil mill and walk between cities in the Alpujarras.

This tour visits what are known as the “Cities of Light:” Granada, Cordoba, and Sevilla, including popular and impressive sites such as the Alhambra Palace and Sevilla’s cathedral. The train trip to Cordoba is on the AVE, the Spain high-speed rail, a fun and fast way to travel. Cordoba boasts world-famous Moorish architecture, beautiful courtyard patio houses, and a revitalized riverside full of cafes. The registration deadline is February 28.

Cultural Jewels of the United Kingdom, scheduled for July 25-August 8, 2019, also continues to accept registrations. The tour cost of $6,444 includes round trip flights from Chicago, with airport transport from Grand Rapids to Chicago for passengers from West Michigan. The cost also includes an intra-tour flight from Dublin to London, 13 nights of accommodations, and tickets to two theater performances.

Explore the rich cultural and literary history of Ireland, England, and Scotland. You will walk the footsteps of famous writers, backstage tours at multiple theatres, and be a part of the audience in world-famous venues. You’ll have a chance to shop at Harrods Department Store, tour the Guinness factory, as well as London’s Parliament building. Leading the trip is Calvin Communications professor Debra Freeberg.

One-of-a-kind experiences
• Premier seating at the Edinburgh Military Tattoo
• Two hand-selected theatre performances.
• Literary sightseeing experiences:
  Literary Walk in Dublin
  Dublin Writers Museum
  Book of Kells
• Behind-the-scenes tours of the National Theater (London) and The Royal Shakespeare Company Theater (The Globe Theatre)
• Tour Westminster Palace (London Parliament Building)

Two Itinerary Day Details

In touring a day at Westminster Palace, you’ll see Lord’s Chamber, Commons Chamber, Queen’s Robing Room, Westminster Hall, and much more. After an independent lunch, visit the Churchill War Rooms — the underground bunker that sheltered Winston Churchill’s war cabinet.

Another day in London is largely dedicated to the Globe Theatre. The day begins with a visit to the Tate Modern Art Museum. Here you may choose to join the Artists Society tour, enjoy the works of contemporary artists (Picasso, Warhol, Matisse, etc.) on your own, or visit the roof terrace with its 360-degree views of the river. After an early lunch, head to the Globe Theatre for a guided tour of the Royal Shakespeare Company Theatre. You’ll learn about what goes into creating the theatre productions and discuss the history of the Royal Shakespeare Company as you tour both public and private spaces of the building. From there, walk across the London Bridge to the London Tower. The day ends at St. Paul’s Cathedral for their Evensong.
A third trip accepting registrations has but two spots remaining, *Pacific Northwest*, from September 14-24, with tour leader John Apol. The cost is $3,495 from Grand Rapids for double occupancy.

**Itinerary highlights**

- Seattle Space Needle
- Chihuly Garden and Glass
- Pike Place Market
- Mount Rainier National Park
- Mount St. Helens
- Olympic National Park
- Vancouver Island and Victoria
- Butchart Gardens
- San Juan Islands and whale-watching cruise

Opening just last week is a fourth travel opportunity, *Southwest Missions*, from October 4-16, with tour leader Gary Nederveld. A CALL instructor, he is a former international program director for World Renew. He has lived in and now regularly visits the Southwest states, spending much of the winter in southern Arizona where he volunteers as docent at Tumacacori National Historical Park.

Travelers will explore the history of missions and experiences of the native peoples in New Mexico, Arizona, and California. This tour begins in Albuquerque, N.M. and ends in San Diego, CA. Along with visits to various mission sites founded by Franciscans and Jesuits, there will be visits to Christian Reformed missions and churches in the area.

**Itinerary highlights**

- Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta
- Mass at the Cathedral Basilica de Francisco of Assisi
- Taos Pueblo
- Canyon de Chelly National Monument
- Rehoboth Christian School
- Navajo Code Talker Museum
- Zuni Mission
- Sabino Canyon, Sonoran Desert
- Presidio San Agustín Fort and Museum living history reenactment
- Mass at Mission San Xavier del Bac
- Mission Basilica San Diego de Alcalá

At the absolutely most scenic time of the year, you are invited to visit the spectacular Southwest, touring ancient sites and learning of the recent history involving the encounters of the varied peoples of the Southwest. We will visit many of the places you have on your life list: the Santa Fe/ Taos, Navajo and Canyon de Chelly, Zuni, southern Arizona, and southern California regions. Meeting with Native Americans and hearing from National Park Rangers, we will learn about and contrast what took place and what is taking place now in New Mexico, Arizona, and California.

*Continued., pg. 8*

Full itinerary details for all trips are available on our website or call us at 526-8777 to be mailed a brochure.