New Books & Articles


Reformation, Research, Teaching, Community Outreach

Puritan Reformed Journal


From the Director

2017 is a landmark year for those interested in the Reformation, as it marks five hundred years since Martin Luther’s 95 theses against indulgences were nailed to the door of the Wittenberg church on October 31, 1517. Although the Reformation spread quickly across Europe, it was largely a German phenomenon. Calvinism emerged in France and Belgium as a reaction to the increasingly violent religious conflicts throughout Europe. The H. H. Meeter Center for Calvin Studies was established in 2013 to focus on research, teaching, and outreach in Calvin’s thought and its modern heritage.

The Center supports research and teaching activities in the fields of Reformed Theology and its inheritance in modernity. We have sponsored and co-sponsored numerous conferences and public lectures, and we have published a series of journal articles in Reformed Theology. Our publications include Calvinus Pastor: Eisegetica, a collection of essays on Calvin’s eisegetical approach to the Bible. The Center is dedicated to the ongoing study of Calvin’s thought and its impact on modern society.

Recent Rare Book Acquisition


This work is the only edition of Calvin’s response to the criticism of his former friend and secretary François Baudouin, a jurist and historian who had embraced Calvinism before returning to Catholicism. Calvin’s response is to Baudouin’s polemic against him, published in Paris. This work, which is only 117 pages long, contains Calvin’s strong response to Baudouin, the texts of fourteen letters Baudouin had sent to Calvin between 1545 and 1555, and the works of others who supported Calvin and were critical of Baudouin. The Meeter Center acquired this work in January 2017. Like all our rare books, it is available to Meeter Center visitors upon request.

From Calvin University

Spring 2017, Number 59

Calvin Courier

H. Henry Meeter Center for Calvin Studies

Reformation, Research, Teaching, Community Outreach

Spring 2017, Number 59

From the Director

2017 is a landmark year for those interested in the Reformation, as it marks five hundred years since Martin Luther issued his Ninety-Five Theses against indulgences. Although the 500th anniversary of John Calvin’s birth in 2009 kept us very busy at the Meeter Center, this year brings together Christians from a broader array of churches and denominations, all interested in finding out more about the Reformation and how to commemorate it. So far this year, the Meeter Center has sponsored or co-sponsored two public lectures on campus, one national conference, a Bach choral performance featuring the composer’s cantata based on Luther’s hymn, “Ein fester Burg”, and has hosted a special exhibition on Luther’s life and times. We invite all newsletter recipients to visit our website, https://calvin.edu/newsletters/meeter-center/ to find out more.

One of the recurring questions of this anniversary year is whether the Reformation still holds any significance in the twenty-first century. Why should people living in our modern multi-faith world with growing percentages of Continuing on page 2
From the Director, continued from page 1

those with “no religion” have any interest in the religious upheavals of sixteenth-century Europe? I have been addressing this important issue in a number of rounds of the discussion both in a major public lecture now available on YouTube (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E99MUlmMUKt=1835s) and in a short book intended for a general audience, published by the Calvin College Press, Does the Reformation Still Matter? (https://calvin.edu/directory/publications/does-the-reformation-still-matter-)

The Meeter Center is continuing to build its collection and welcome scholars, fellowship recipients, and visitors. We want to highlight a new fellowship, offered for the first time in 2018-19 (apply by January 1, 2018). The Meeter Family Fellowship offers $3,500 towards travel, accommodations, and research-related expenses for a four to six week period. These three-week projects on Calvin, Calvinism, or the Reformation also connect to continuing issues of concern in the church and society today are particularly encouraged to apply. See https://calvin.edu/centers-institutes/meeter-center/fellowships-scholarships/meeter-family-fellowship/ for more information and an application form.

Finally, I want to express my appreciation to Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary, to our donors (the Friends of the Meeter Center), the Meeter Center Governing Board, and Meeter Center staff (Paul Fields and Laura Beer) and student assistant, Matt Wright. As the Meeter Center marks its 35th anniversary, and I mark the 20th anniversary of my service as director of the Center, it is truly a delight to testify yet again that the work of the Center could not carry on without the support and hard work of so many. Thank you!

Highlights from “Here I Stand” Martin Luther Exhibition

Since March 9 and ongoing through April, the Meeter Center has operated as a local hub for Reformation-themed events with its “Here I Stand” Exhibition. Over 200 people, including local church and school groups from various religious denominations, have come to see the exhibition in commemoration of 500 years since Martin Luther wrote his 95 theses. Thirty German-government commissioned posters, free at here-i-stand.com and placed throughout the Center, provide a visually engaging summary of the Reformation and its impact. The posters are split into seven categories, describing key moments in Luther’s life; his disagreement with Catholic practices; and the Reformation’s ideas, spread and impact. The final two sections highlight women in the Reformation and the legacy of the Reformation today. Unique legacy charts spotlight political hierarchies, Reformation event timelines, and networks of Reformers. Colorful maps visualize key Reformation sites, political empires, and city structures.

The Meeter Center staff has tailored learning enrichment experiences to the demographics of each visiting group. Adult groups received a short introduction, whereas high school students had an introductory lecture and interactive worksheets. Elementary students engaged with eight staff-created interactive stations, including dramatic reenactments, media presentations, and “print-making” stamping.

The exhibition will be up through the end of April. Some of the posters will be displayed again at the Center Art Gallery from September 5 to October 14 and at the Seminary in the fall.

In University of Toronto History Professor Nicholas Terpstra’s Meeter Center Spring Lecture, he asked, “What would it look like to tell the story of the Reformation through the lens of the massive forced refugee experience of that time?” And, pedagogically speaking, what does the 16th century Reformation say to a 21st century global generation? When Dr. Terpstra studied the Reformation, he found that there was plenty of forced migration going on.

As early as the 13th century, European Christians persecuted marginalized groups such as lepers, religious heretics, Jews and Muslims. The Reformation period expanded areas of persecution, with implications for scope, periodization, intellectual/cultural forms, as well as political interactions. The scope broadened to include more non-Christians: among those, Jews, Muslims and Hindus were drawn in, and even aboriginals in the Americas. Many of these others were given the choice to convert to Christianity or be exiled. Periodization refers to a convenient device that can define the story. For instance, the 1500s mark the beginning of the Reformation. At the same time, Jews faced expulsion from the Iberian Peninsula, and from the cities to the suburbs. The 1600s witnessed early ethno-cleansings and massive expulsions of many religious groups: Muslims, Puritans, Huguenots, and Acadians, to name a few. During the Reformation, intellectual and cultural forms expanded through changing theological, such as doctrines of purity and contagion. These divergent doctrinal precipitated migrations and conflict through forced baptism, language of election and separate chosen communities. Forced removal of corrupt doctrines, violent iconolasm and martyrlogies became common. The Reformation also had political implications, including the growing power of political leaders in religious affairs and the use of state pressure to expel religious minorities.

Dr. Terpstra concluded his lecture by asking what this narrative of the refugee experience during the Reformation can teach today’s generation. The Reformation was the birth of the modern age, and as such, religious dislocation is a part of our own narrative. People today want to understand this recurring theme as it applies to refugee crises in our time.

Spring Lecture with Professor Nicholas Terpstra

Apply for a Fellowship or Scholarship!

Every year, the Meeter Center offers fellowships for graduate students, faculty, and pastors, with awards ranging $2,000-$4,000. We also offer scholarships for high school seniors, with awards of $3,500 and $2,000 to be applied to college tuition at one of six specific colleges. For more information on fellowships and scholarships, see http://www.calvin.edu/meeter/new/fellowships-and-scholarships.htm

Upcoming Events

April 30 & May 1, 7:30 pm: Bach Chorale of Grand Rapids’ Reformation-Themed Concerts Central RC, 10 College Ave. NE, Grand Rapids MI, 49503.

Sept. 5-Oct. 14: Calvin College Center Art Gallery Reformation Art Exhibition

Oct 5: Calvin Theological Seminary Reformed-Catholic Dialogue: “What Can Protestants and Catholics learn from one another?”

Oct-Nov: CALL Course with Karin Maag: “Come Explore the Reformation”

Oct 30-Nov. 3: Reformation Week events

Oct 31: Meeter Center Reformation Day Teach-In

Awards and Fellowships

Hugh and Eve Meeter High School Award: 1st Prize, $3,500:

- Benjamin Anema, Caledonia MI

2nd Prize, $2,000:

- Austin R. Prins, Sioux Falls SD
- Hannah Blom, Mundelein IL
- Kate Lodewyk, Fargo ND

Faculty Fellowships:

- Dr. Kirk Summers, Professor of Modern Languages and Classics at University of Alabama, will study Theodore Beza’s Reformation for the first time this Fall (apply by January 1, 2018). The Meeter Family Fellowship offers $3,500 towards travel, accommodations, and research-related expenses for a four to six-week period. These three-week projects on Calvin, Calvinism, or the Reformation also connect to continuing issues of concern in the church and society today are particularly encouraged to apply. See https://calvin.edu/centers-institutes/meeter-center/fellowships-scholarships/meeter-family-fellowship/ for more information and an application form.

- Kyle Drake, Ph.D. student at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, will research the reflection of Puritan theology in the laws of the colonies of Connecticut and New Haven, 1638-1665.

- Kristen Coan, Ph.D. student at the University of Arizona, will study women and children at l’Hôpital Général in sixteenth-century Geneva.

- Holly Kizewski, Ph.D. student at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, will investigate domestic disputes before the Genevan Consistory, 1542-1564.

- John Simons, Ph.D. student at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, will research the reflection of Puritan theology in the laws of the colonies of Connecticut and New Haven, 1638-1665.

Student Fellowships:

- Karin Maag, Ph.D. student at the University of Arizona, will study women and children at l’Hôpital Général in sixteenth-century Geneva.

Friends Fellowships:

- Kyle Drake, Ph.D. student at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, will research the reflection of Puritan theology in the laws of the colonies of Connecticut and New Haven, 1638-1665.

- Kristen Coan, Ph.D. student at the University of Arizona, will study women and children at l’Hôpital Général in sixteenth-century Geneva.

- Holly Kizewski, Ph.D. student at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, will investigate domestic disputes before the Genevan Consistory, 1638-1665.

- John Simons, Ph.D. student at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, will research the reflection of Puritan theology in the laws of the colonies of Connecticut and New Haven, 1638-1665.

- Kristen Coan, Ph.D. student at the University of Arizona, will study women and children at l’Hôpital Général in sixteenth-century Geneva.

- Holly Kizewski, Ph.D. student at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, will investigate domestic disputes before the Genevan Consistory, 1638-1665.

- John Simons, Ph.D. student at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, will research the reflection of Puritan theology in the laws of the colonies of Connecticut and New Haven, 1638-1665.

- Kristen Coan, Ph.D. student at the University of Arizona, will study women and children at l’Hôpital Général in sixteenth-century Geneva.

- Holly Kizewski, Ph.D. student at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, will investigate domestic disputes before the Genevan Consistory, 1638-1665.

- John Simons, Ph.D. student at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, will research the reflection of Puritan theology in the laws of the colonies of Connecticut and New Haven, 1638-1665.

- Kristen Coan, Ph.D. student at the University of Arizona, will study women and children at l’Hôpital Général in sixteenth-century Geneva.

- Holly Kizewski, Ph.D. student at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, will investigate domestic disputes before the Genevan Consistory, 1638-1665.

- John Simons, Ph.D. student at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, will research the reflection of Puritan theology in the laws of the colonies of Connecticut and New Haven, 1638-1665.

- Kristen Coan, Ph.D. student at the University of Arizona, will study women and children at l’Hôpital Général in sixteenth-century Geneva.

- Holly Kizewski, Ph.D. student at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, will investigate domestic disputes before the Genevan Consistory, 1638-1665.

- John Simons, Ph.D. student at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, will research the reflection of Puritan theology in the laws of the colonies of Connecticut and New Haven, 1638-1665.

- Kristen Coan, Ph.D. student at the University of Arizona, will study women and children at l’Hôpital Général in sixteenth-century Geneva.

- Holly Kizewski, Ph.D. student at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, will investigate domestic disputes before the Genevan Consistory, 1638-1665.

- John Simons, Ph.D. student at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, will research the reflection of Puritan theology in the laws of the colonies of Connecticut and New Haven, 1638-1665.

- Kristen Coan, Ph.D. student at the University of Arizona, will study women and children at l’Hôpital Général in sixteenth-century Geneva.

- Holly Kizewski, Ph.D. student at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, will investigate domestic disputes before the Genevan Consistory, 1638-1665.

- John Simons, Ph.D. student at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, will research the reflection of Puritan theology in the laws of the colonies of Connecticut and New Haven, 1638-1665.