In Cologne, Dutch migrants had to organize their church in secret, perform their rituals quietly, and attend Catholic funerals for a good coexistence with their Catholic neighbors. The Dutch religious refugees in Aachen stopped holding services in their native language and aligned their own religious identity with the German Reformed congregation. Settled in Frankfurt, Dutch Reformed migrants were also ready to sign Lutheran confessions, marry and even let their children be baptized in those churches. Indeed, they all adapted to survive as Reformed congregations.

Gorter’s research is welcome as it challenges us to rethink our faith and the extent to which we are willing to review our commitments in face of the most complex social scenarios.

Jean Francesco A. L. Gomes
PhD student, Calvin Theological Seminary

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From the Director

This summer and fall have been busy, particularly with our work surrounding the commemoration of the 400th anniversary of the Synod of Dordt. It helps that the synod met from October 1618 to May 1619, giving us more time to line up a series of events to mark the anniversary, from a two-day conference in September (see p. 2) to a special exhibit this fall, displaying early editions of the Statenbijbel, the Dutch-language Bible translation from the original Hebrew and Greek, commissioned by the Synod of Dordt and underwritten by the Dutch government. For more on the Synod of Dordt and the Statenbijbel, see the web pages the Meeter Center has put together as a resource: https://calvin.edu/centers-institutes/meeter-center/about-the-synod-of-dordt/

During the summer months, we also hosted both our biennial Genevan paleography workshop (see p. 3) and five visiting scholars who each spent a month at the Meeter Center conducting their research. See p. 3 for a report from one of these fellowship recipients, Janine Williams, from South Africa. This fall’s student research fellowship recipient, Peter Gorter, gave our fall public lecture on religious refugees in the sixteenth century (see pp. 1 and 4 for a report on his presentation).

We deeply appreciate all the support we have received from donors to the Center over the years – we continue to encourage contributions large and small, especially as we work to build a much-needed endowment to ensure the Meeter Center’s future for generations to come. You can find more information about making a gift to the Center on p. 2 and at https://calvin.edu/centers-institutes/meeter-center/contribute/. Many thanks!

Karin Maag

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New Books & Articles


From the Director

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Karin Maag

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A hundred people gathered at Calvin Theological Seminary on September 14 and 15 for a series of lively presentations on the Synod of Dordt (1618-19) and its impact. The opening session was led by Johannes Bogerman, president of the synod as brought to life by Dr. John Hesselink, emeritus president and professor of systematic theology at Western Theological Seminary in Holland, MI. John died on October 28, 2018, at age 90. He was a prolific scholar, whose works included On Being Reformed (1983), Calvin’s Concept of the Law (1992), Calvin’s First Catechism (1997), and Calvin’s Theology and its Reception (jointly edited with Todd Billings) (2012). John was a knowledgeable, faithful, thoughtful, and deeply kind man, who continued to participate actively in many Reformation-related conferences, lectures, and events, including those at the Meeter Center, well after his retirement from Western in 1992. We join with many others in expressing heartfelt sympathy to his wife Etta and the entire Hesselink family.

Janine Williams

Fellowship Report

I hereby wish to thank all role players for a wonderfully productive time at the Meeter Centre. The highlight of the stay was the reading material. Whatever I looked for, was available, whether books or articles. The environment also makes studying possible, as it is quiet, private and cool inside. The use of the offices created a space in which I could focus and concentrate on the work at hand. The staff was very friendly and I would like to thank Paul, Karin, Jake and Jacob for their hospitality and kindness. They helped with every question, every enquiry and assisted with every challenge. I completed more work in the month of my stay, than I was able to in a year in South Africa, especially since I am in a full time job. My PhD is nearly finished now; something I thought impossible a few months ago. Thank you for making this all possible. I appreciate every opportunity that allows me to progress in this way.

Yours in gratitude,

Janine Williams

Friends of the Meeter Center fellowship recipient, 2018