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John Calvin

Calvin Courier

The newsletter of the H. Henry Meeter Center for Calvin Studies

Spring 2011, Number 47

From the Director

The Meeter Center has had a busy year! Much of the Center's activity since last fall has focused on cataloging and integrating the books from the Kingdon collection into the Meeter Center and Hekman Library. At the end of the process, we were left with a number of duplicate books, which we offered to the wider community through a book sale on campus in April and through an on-line catalog. Proceeds from the sale have gone to the Meeter Center rare book fund. We are deeply grateful to Professor Robert Kingdon for his extremely generous gift to us, and we join his numerous friends and colleagues across North America and Europe in mourning his passing in December 2010. Please see p. 2 for our memorial tribute.

This year's Meeter Center fellowship recipients have been selected. Their names and topics are listed on p. 3. The first of these, Reverend Bernhard Glück, a pastor in the German Evangelical church, has been in residence since early March, and he gives an overview of his experiences during his stay in Grand Rapids below.

From July 25 to July 29, the Meeter Center will be running a one-week workshop on the Reformation for high school teachers, in conjunction with Calvin College's Education department. Participants will be able to obtain graduate credit for the workshop, and the first eight applicants will receive a \$500 bursary to cover the bulk of the enrollment costs. More information and registration information can be found via the Center's website.

Finally, I am happy to announce that after conversations with college administrators and the Meeter Center Governing Board, I will continue on as director of the Meeter Center at least for the next three years. The Meeter Center curator Paul Fields, Program Coordinator Ryan Noppen, Student Assistant Drew McGinnis, volunteer Sue Poll and I will continue our strong teamwork to ensure that the Meeter Center remains one of the foremost locations for research on Calvin, the Reformation, and early modern Europe, as we prepare to mark our thirtieth anniversary year.

Karin Y. Maag

Where in the World is Grand Rapids?

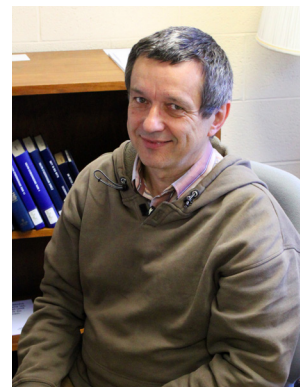
This was the question I got asked when I announced that I was going to the United States for three months. In fact, I myself had to first look at a map, to see where Grand Rapids was. All I knew about the place was that Calvin Theological Seminary was located there, and that it held the greatest collection of works by and about John Calvin.

Then when I arrived in Grand Rapids, many people asked me why I had come all this way. I quickly realized that few people know of the treasures for the mind and spirit held by the Meeter Center. Indeed, John Calvin presented many key teachings at the dawn of the early modern era.

During the final years of his life, he wrote, "I will pray to our good Lord, that he not extinguish and snuff out the grace that he has given to you, but rather restore it, so that you might become a mirror of his endless love." A few months before his

death, he summarized the essence of his work as a Reformer in Geneva as follows: "Hatred and Christianity are two different things, that cannot go together. I define hatred as being completely contrary to the love that we should have for our fellow men, namely to desire and strive for their well-being. As far as possible, we must work diligently to maintain harmony and peace with everyone."

Therefore, I have come to Grand Rapids to learn more about this man – John Calvin. Thanks to the cordial help of Professor Herman J. Selderhuis, of Professor Karin Maag (Director of the Meeter Center), and of her assistants Paul Fields and Ryan Noppen, and thanks



Bernhard Glück

continued on page 3

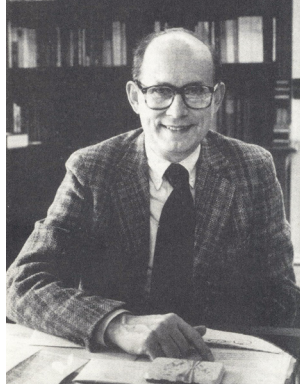
In Memoriam: Robert McCune Kingdon

Robert Kingdon, emeritus professor of Reformation History at the University of Wisconsin Madison, died December 3, 2010 in Madison.

Born in Chicago in 1927, he spent the first twelve years of his life in Hawaii, before moving with his family to Wisconsin.

Dr. Kingdon obtained his PhD from Columbia

University in 1955 and began his teaching career at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst and then at the University of Iowa. He subsequently moved to the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he taught from 1965 until his retirement in 1998. While at Wisconsin-Madison, he also served as director of the Institute for Research in the Humanities from 1975 to 1987. He was the author of six books and the editor of twelve more. Among his most celebrated works were *Geneva and the Coming of the Wars of Religion in France, 1555-1563* (Geneva, 1956); *Geneva and the Consolidation of the French Protestant Movement, 1564-1571* (Geneva and Madison, 1967); *Myths about the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacres, 1572-1576* (Cambridge, Mass., 1988); and *Adultery and Divorce in Calvin's Geneva* (Cambridge, Mass., 1995).



Robert McCune Kingdon

He served with distinction as editor of the Sixteenth Century Journal, president of the Sixteenth Century Society and Conference, and president of the Church History Society, and received honorary doctorates both from the University of Geneva and from his alma mater, Oberlin College.

He built close connections to the Meeter Center over the years, first as recipient of a faculty research fellowship in 1987, and then serving two terms as a member at large of the Meeter Center Governing Board. The Meeter Center was proud to work with him on his extensive project of transcribing and editing the Genevan Consistory Records from the period of Calvin's lifetime, and we were delighted to celebrate with him in 2000, when the English translation of the first volume of the Consistory records was published by Eerdmans. He also provided strong encouragement and support for the Meeter Center's biennial Genevan paleography course.

We honor Bob's memory and are thankful for his many years of friendship and steadfast support of the Meeter Center and its work.

Lecture Recordings

For our friends who cannot attend, Meeter Center Lectures and Colloquia are recorded, with speakers' permission, and are accessible on the Center's website via podcasts.

Update on the PRDL Project

On February 17, 2011, Todd Rester, a doctoral candidate at Calvin Theological Seminary, and Jordan Ballor, a doctoral candidate at the University of Zurich, gave a presentation about the progress of the Post-Reformation Digital Library (PRDL) project. The origins of PRDL were discussed as well as its current status and future plans for the tool.

The PRDL is a free-access select bibliography of digital books relating to the development of theology and philosophy during the Reformation and Post-Reformation/Early Modern eras (late 15th-18th c.) and is currently hosted by the Meeter Center. The PRDL grew out of discussions among historical theologians at Calvin Seminary about research methods and the challenges and opportunities created by digital tools. It became clear that a way to coordinate efforts and divide the work to locate and categorize digital sources from these periods would be useful to students and researchers, both while in the midst of and after the conclusion of dissertation projects.

From these discussions the first version of the PRDL was created, a digital bibliography focusing on primary sources in theology and philosophy from a variety of confessional and ecclesial traditions. Launched publicly in the fall of 2009, the PRDL quickly grew in depth and breadth, and by the following spring covered works from over 800 authors. Since that time the executive board has focused on ways to improve the functionality and usability of the site. Rester and Ballor described a number of the limitations to the basic bibliographic format of the original form of the tool, and announced plans to release a database-driven version of the PRDL later this year. This updated version of PRDL currently covers over 30,000 volumes and 1,600 authors.



Jordan Ballor

In addition to these technical changes to how the tool will work and look, the PRDL executive board also recently announced the formation of an editorial advisory board. The advisory board consists of a wide range of scholars from institutions all over Europe and North America. The editorial advisory board will provide assistance to the executive board by providing feedback on the usability of the website as well as identification of ways to expand the coverage of the site. The goal is for the Post-Reformation Digital Library (PRDL) to have the depth of coverage in other theological and philosophical traditions that matches the current scope of the Reformed tradition.

To access the site and to see a full list of the PRDL executive and advisory board members, please visit <http://www.prdl.org>.

“Where in the World is Grand Rapids”, *continued*

to the financial support provided by the Emo Van Halsema Research Fellowship for Pastors in the Reformed Tradition, I have felt quickly at home in this paradise for every Calvin scholar. Everything that one may want to obtain that is written by or about Calvin is readily to hand.

My goal is to generate interest and reactions, so that the life of Calvin can be made into a feature-length film. This movie should be based on the current state of research in Calvin studies.

Rev. Bernhard Glück

Teaching Physics in the 16th Century

On Thursday, March 3, the Meeter Center welcomed Dr. Anja-Silvia Goeing, a postdoctoral scholar from Germany currently holding a visiting fellowship in the History Department at Harvard University. Dr. Goeing is working on a book project on the Zurich Lectorium during the 1560s. The Lectorium was the name of the institution that provided higher education in Zurich during the Reformation era. In her presentation, Dr. Goeing focused on Konrad Gesner, who taught physics in the Lectorium from 1546 to 1565, and who was known for his production of textbooks and encyclopedias, that organized knowledge into categories, making it easier both to find information and to learn and recall it. Gesner also worked in Zurich as a physician, and thus was able to combine his medical work and his scholarly interests for the benefit of the students at the Lectorium. Those in attendance at the lecture in the Meeter Center benefitted by learning more about Zurich in the Reformation era and its educational approach.



Anja-Silvia Goeing

Fellowships Awarded in 2011

Friends of the Meeter Center Fellowship

Dr. Antonio Carlos Barro, Chancellor of the South American Theological Seminary in Londrina - Paraná, Brazil, will examine the importance of John Calvin for the development of the missionary work of the church and the formation of a theology of God's mission.

Emo F.J. Van Halsema Fellowship

Rev. Bernhard Glück, Minister of the Evangelical Church of Württemberg in the communities of Gailenkirchen and Gottwollshausen in Germany, is researching and writing a script for a feature-length German film about the life of John Calvin.

Emo F.J. Van Halsema Fellowship

Rev. Erik Van Alten, Minister of the Free Reformed Church Pretoria-Maranatha, South Africa, will research the implications of the pneumatology for the ecclesiology in John Calvin's commentary on the Acts of the Apostles.


Book Sale Benefits Rare Book Fund

On April 13th and 14th the Meeter Center held a used book sale. Approximately 1,000 books were laid out on tables in the Center. Each table held specifically priced books which were color coded beginning with one dollar books, five dollar books, etc. up to a table holding titles worth fifty dollars and more. When the doors opened at 9:00 AM students, professors, and a few book dealers streamed in. By noon the next day we had sold a majority of the works. It was a fun change-of-pace from our normal activities in the Center; however, such a sale is not to become a regular event. In this particular case a gift to the Center of Dr. Robert Kingdon's personal library left the library and the Center with a number of duplicate titles which were not needed. We also organized an online sale of some of the books. The proceeds from these sales have gone to our Rare Book fund.

Friends of the Meeter Center

We welcome members to the Friends of the Meeter Center. Friends' donations help provide funding for special programs, including the Friends of the Meeter Center Fellowships, the Rare Book fund, and the upcoming comprehensive catalog of John Calvin medallions. Checks may be made out to Friends of the Meeter Center and sent to the Center's address. Thank you for your support! Annual membership fees are:

Student	\$20	Associate	\$100
Supporter	\$40	Partner	\$200
Donor	\$75	Benefactor	\$500



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H. Henry Meeter Center for Calvin Studies,
Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary
1855 Knollcrest Circle SE
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49546.
Ph. 616-526-7081
E-mail: meeter@calvin.edu
Web: www.calvin.edu/meeter

Recent Acquisitions

Fehleison, Jill. *Boundaries of Faith*. Kirksville: Truman State University Press, 2010.

Gunnoe, Charles D. *Thomas Erastus and the Palatinate: A Renaissance Physician in the Second Reformation*. Leiden: Brill, 2011.

Holder, R. Ward. *The Westminster Handbook to Theologies of the Reformation*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010.

Selderhuis, H. J. ed. *Calvin - Saint or Sinner?* Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010.

Smith, James K. A. *Letters to a Young Calvinist: An Invitation to the Reformed Tradition*. Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2010.

Steinmetz, David Curtis. *Calvin in Context*. Oxford: Oxford

University Press, 2010. (reprint)

Wilczek, Piotr. *Reformacja w dawnej Rzeczypospolitej i jej europejskie konteksty: postulaty badawcze*. Warsaw: Uniwersytet Warszawski, Instytut Badań Interdyscyplinarnych “Artes Liberales”, 2010.

Witvliet, John D. *The Legacy of John Calvin and the Renewal of Christian Worship*. Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, 2009.

Hugh and Eve Meeter Calvinism Awards for High School Seniors

The 2011 winners are:

1st Place: **Jennifer Kuiper** of El Paso, TX

2nd Place: **Emily Holwerda** of Grand Rapids, MI

Both winners have been admitted to Calvin College

The H. Henry Meeter Center for Calvin Studies
Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary
1855 Knollcrest Circle SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49546-4402