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*John Calvin*

# Calvin Courier

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

Spring 2009, Number 43

## From the Director

The John Calvin anniversary year is now in full swing. We held a very successful Calvin Studies Society conference in April - see the report on p. 2. Immediately after the conference, I flew to Europe to join a tour of friends of Calvin College, "In the Footsteps of John Calvin." I gave a number of presentations on Calvin's life and on various aspects of Reformation history during the ten-day tour. The Meeter Center staff has also been busy giving presentations on John Calvin and his impact for a number of groups in the Grand Rapids area: interest in these presentations is growing as more people start planning events in conjunction with the Reformer's birthday.

In late May, I will represent the Meeter Center at an international conference in Geneva, while Curator Paul

Fields will do the same at a conference to mark John Calvin's birthday in Toronto in mid June. In late June, we will welcome twenty-five participants for our three-week NEH summer institute, while our regular visiting scholars will be arriving at various times over the summer and early fall, so we have a busy few months in prospect.

Finally, we are delighted to report that our friend, former Meeter Center Board member and noted Calvin scholar Professor Robert Kingdon, continues to make remarkable progress in his recovery from a serious brain hemorrhage suffered in August 2008. We look forward to the day when we can welcome him back to Meeter Center-hosted events in Grand Rapids.

*Karin Y. Maag*

## "Raiding the Mystical Ark: The Suppression of the Huguenot Multipliant Sect (Montpellier, March-April, 1723)"

Even if the issue of tolerance has always been of interest, recent scholarship evidences increased attention to this topic. Particularly noteworthy are the religious controversies from sixteenth- through eighteenth-century France, given that the dynamics changed radically from the situation during the Wars of Religion (1562-1598), to the truce under the provisions of the Edict of Nantes (1598), and to the era of the Refuge after the Revocation of the Edict (1685). On March 5, 2009, Professor Otto Selles of the French department at Calvin College presented his findings on the suppression of a group of the "RPR"—Religion Prétendue Réformée, or "Religion Claimed to be Reformed," the derogatory title used by Roman Catholics for all Protestant groups—during the Refuge in Montpellier in southern France. Using a wide range of original manuscript material he had been able to photograph in various archival

deposits, Selles reconstructed the series of events that began with the report to the authorities regarding secret religious meetings held in the house of one Anne Robert. When the lieutenant went to investigate, he found nearly fifteen participants, and further investigation revealed that as many as fifty attended the meetings, arriving on Saturday and leaving again on Monday – a circumstance which led to them being called condormants ("together-sleepers") or multipliers ("multipliers"), although the members themselves preferred more positive titles such as "Children of Zion." After interrogations and a trial, four of the participants were executed, and others were sent to the galleys, to



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*Otto Selles*

## “Raiding the Mystical Ark”, cont.

the Tour of Constance, or even to a convent. Given restrictions of time, Selles was unable to develop the implications of these events for the nature of religious tolerance (or intolerance) in France during the period of the Refuge, yet we look forward to the time when his full-length study will appear in print.

*Albert Gootjes, Ph.D student, Calvin Theological Seminary*

## Conference Report: “John Calvin: Myth and Reality”

From April 16 to 18, the Meeter Center hosted the biennial Calvin Studies Society Conference, bringing together one of the largest gatherings of Calvin scholars in North America this year, to mark John Calvin’s 500th birthday. This year’s topic, “John Calvin: Myth and Reality,” attracted over a hundred pre-registrants plus a number of walk-ins. Participants heard presentations on a range of subjects including the perceptions of Calvin among his contemporaries in the Netherlands and the German lands, Calvin’s impact on church discipline, and Calvinism’s impact on a global scale, including in seventeenth-century Java and twentieth-century Korea. Our two evening events were very successful. On Thursday night, the chapel was standing room only, as 220 people came to hear Richard Muller (Calvin Theological Seminary), Laura Smit (Calvin College) and Richard Mouw (Fuller Theological Seminary) discuss predestination. On Friday night, an appreciative audience enjoyed Pastor Randall Engle’s presentation on the use of organs in Reformed churches, complete with Engle’s rendition of organ preludes based on the Psalm melodies and the audience’s singing of his setting of “Happy Birthday” to John Calvin in a Genevan Psalm form at the end of the evening. We were particularly pleased at the number of first-time attendees at the conference and at the high calibre of the presentations, which will be subsequently published in a conference volume. The next Calvin Studies Society conference will take place in April 2011, in Minneapolis, on Calvin and Luther.

### 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.*



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## NEH Summer Institute Participants Selected

From June 29 to July 17, 2009, the Meeter Center is hosting a summer institute, “Making Sense of the Reformation,” funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, and directed at teachers from public and private high schools from across the nation. The following high school teachers have been chosen by the selection committee for this prestigious program:

*Elizabeth Bierling-Powers*

Washingtonville Central Schools, Washingtonville, NY

*Daren Blanck*

Pequot Lakes High School, Pequot Lakes, MN

*Cathy Borri*

Kenowa Hills High School, Grand Rapids, MI

*Susan Cullen*

Bethlehem Central High School, Delmar, NY

*LaNesha DeBardelaben*

Flint Community Schools, Flint MI

*David Doré*

Westwood High School, Westwood, MA

*Jayson Evaniuck*

Raleigh-Egypt High School, Memphis, TN

*Matthew Frick*

Salt Lake Lutheran High School, Salt Lake City, UT

*Eric Gelston*

Contra Costa Christian Schools, Walnut Creek, CA

*James Goodspeed*

Fulton High School, Middleton, MI

*Alan James*

Hong Kong International School, Hong Kong, CHINA

*Alexander Kalsbeek*

Heritage Christian High School, Dyer, IN

*Linda Lapp*

Rush Henrietta Ninth Grade Academy, Henrietta, NY

*Susan Lindstrom*

Bishop Chatard High School, Indianapolis, IN

*Kael Moffat*

Highland Park High School, Topeka, KS

*Sharon Richardson*

Minooka Community High School, Channahon, IL

*Therisa Rogers*

Farmington High School, Farmington, MI

*Lisa Samy*

Calaveras Hills High School, Milpitas, CA

*Alan Santoni*

Kettering High School, Detroit, MI

*Robert Sorensen*

The Bear Creek School, Redmond, WA

*Brent Springvloed*

South Christian High School, Grand Rapids, MI

*Derek Steinorth*

Eagle Rock Jr./Sr. High School, Los Angeles, CA

*Paul Strauss*

Wellsville-Middletown R-I High School, Wellsville, MO

*Kaelyn Sullivan*

Shoreline Christian School, Shoreline, WA

*Mark VanderWerf*

Calvin Christian High School, Escondido, CA

## Fellowships Award in 2009

### Student Fellowship

*Mr. Sebastian Heck*, Ph.D. student, Theologische Universiteit Apeldoorn, The Netherlands, will research John Calvin's view of the conscience.

### Faculty Fellowship

*Dr. Michael Bruening*, Assistant Professor of History, Missouri University of Science and Technology, will research the unedited correspondence of Pierre Viret.

*Dr. Kuk-Won Shin*, Dean of Academics and Student Affairs, Graduate School, Chongshin University, South Korea, will research Calvinist contributions to a balanced socio-cultural view.

### Emo F.J. Van Halsema Fellowship

*Rev. Dr. Raymond Blacketer*, Pastor, Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church, Neerlandia, Alberta, will research the interaction of the Reformers with the patristic and medieval tradition of biblical interpretation.

*Rev. Dr. Alberto Roldán*, Pastor, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Buenos Aires, Argentina, will research Latin American interpretation of the social and political ethics of John Calvin.

### Friends of the Meeter Center Fellowships

*Mr. Peter Komlosi*, Ph.D. student, New College, University of Edinburgh, Scotland, will research theological education at the Town College in Edinburgh.



**A Limited Number of  
Calvin 500th Anniversary Medals  
are still available**

Visit the Meeter Center's homepage  
to learn how to purchase this unique  
commemorative piece.

<http://www.calvin.edu/meeter>

*Dr. Zhibin Xie*, Associate Professor in Christian Studies, Shanghai Normal University, Peoples Republic of China, will research Common Grace in Calvin.

## Psalm Singing to Mark John Calvin's Birthday

On Thursday, July 9, the evening before John Calvin's 500th birthday, the Meeter Center is holding a community-wide Genevan psalm-singing evening, beginning at 7:30 PM in the Calvin Theological Seminary chapel, planned and directed by Dr. Emily Brink and Emeritus Professor Howard Slenk. Everyone is invited to join in singing better-known and less familiar Genevan psalms (in English!) and hear dramatic readings about the impact of psalm singing in the Reformation era. The evening will conclude with cake and lemonade for all. Don't miss it!

Other upcoming Calvin 500 events to mark on your calendars include:

*October 2, 2009*

Artist Series concert of Improvisations on the Genevan Psalter featuring world-reknowned Dutch organist Sietze DeVries and the Alumni Choir. The concert will take place in the Calvin College Chapel.

*October 15, 2009*

The Meeter Center Fall Lecture featuring Dr. Richard Muller who will be speaking on "Was Calvin a Calvinist?"

*October 30, 2009*

A *Symphony of Psalms*, honoring John Calvin, featuring the Boston Camerata. This Artist Series concert will take place at 8:00 PM in the Calvin College Chapel.

*November 3 - 4, 2009*

Stob Lectures on Calvin by David Steinmetz, Amos Ragan Kearns Professor of the History of Christianity at Duke Divinity School.

## Recent Acquisitions

Beeke, Joel R. *Living for God's Glory: An Introduction to Calvinism*. Lake Mary: Reformation Trust, 2008.

Berg, Machiel Adrianus van den. *Het rijk van christus als historische realiteit: Calvijns anti-apocalyptische uitleg van het boek Daniël*. Bunnik: De Banier, 2008.

Billings, J. Todd. *Calvin, Participation, and the Gift: The Activity of Believers in Union with Christ*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Davis, Thomas J. *This Is My Body: The Presence of Christ in Reformation Thought*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008.

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## Recent Acquisitions, continued

Gopalswamy, Jacob. *The Motif of Stranger in Calvin's Old Testament Commentaries*. Apeldoorn: Instituut voor Reformatieonderzoek, 2008.

Hall, David W. *The Legacy of John Calvin: His Influence on the Modern World*. Phillipsburg: P&R Pub., 2008.

Muller, Richard A. *Christ and the Decree: Christology and Predestination in Reformed Theology from Calvin to Perkins*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008.

Selderhuis, H. J. *John Calvin: A Pilgrim's Life*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2009.

Vischer, Lukas. *The Legacy of John Calvin: Some Actions for the*

*Church in the 21st Century*. Geneva: World Alliance of Reformed Churches, 2008.

Wright, William Andrew. "Saving Difference: The Dialectical-Differential Structure of Calvin's Soteriology." Thesis (Ph. D.) University of Chicago, The Divinity School, 2006.

Zachmann, Randall C., ed. *John Calvin and Roman Catholicism: Critique and Engagement, Then and Now*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008.

### Hugh and Eve Meeter Calvinism Awards for High School Seniors

The 2009 winners are:

1<sup>st</sup> Place: **Jonathan Breems** of Moreno Valley, CA

2<sup>nd</sup> Place: **John Kloosterman** of Thornton, ON

Both winners will attend Calvin College

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