Welcome to 2019—2020

At our fall conference two weeks ago, President Le Roy and our “seasoned guides”—Greg Jones, Patricia Killen, and Gerald Pillay—challenged us to infuse our work with joy, delight, and imagination. Many have told me that they were moved by affirmations of Calvin’s calling to be not only a university but a university that shares its Reformed Christian mission with the world. Between that day and now, we have welcomed students to campus, launched courses, and attended department and committee meetings; we have found our way back into the routines of another academic year.

As we settle into these routines, I hope that we can keep ideas from the fall conference fresh in our minds and that we find time to pause in our work to encourage colleagues to continue to be guided by what Greg Jones described as the “North Star vision of God’s reign.”

Below is some of the advice from the conference that I’ve been mulling over. I’d be curious to hear what stayed with you.

- **Navigate change.** After recounting his family’s recent white-water rafting experience, President Le Roy noted that in times of rapid change, it is really important that everybody is paddling and that everybody is paddling together. In the rapids, only when everyone is paddling will the raft navigate the rapids well.

- **Offer hospitality.** Answering a question about how to keep Calvin’s Reformed identity while welcoming learners from various faith traditions, Greg Jones recommended this: “Be clear about your ‘center’ and then you can have much more porous boundaries that will enable a much wider sense of hospitality.”

- **Take courage and find joy in the journey.** Gerald Pillay shared an insight from Alexander Schmemann, dean of St. Vladimir’s Orthodox Theological Seminary and a leading Orthodox theologian: “God will forgive all our sins except joylessness.”

- **Be bold.** Greg Jones challenged Calvin to be bolder than we have dared to be: “Go through each of your goals and strategies and sharpen them to be more bold. Ask ‘how can we be the best?’ This is the time for Christian higher education to step forward. We are better positioned than even Harvard to chart life-giving holistic approaches to education, to the pursuit of the true, the good, the beautiful.”

- **Trust each other.** Patricia Killen encouraged us to take good care of each other: “Slow down the leap from event to judgement.” “Practice interpretive charity,” said Greg Jones. And finally from Gerald Pillay, “Appoint bright people and let them think.”

- **Don’t look back.** Greg Jones noted that in moments of great change people can become fearful of what God might be calling them to do and might subsequently, “want to go back to Egypt” (Numbers 13 and 14). When we see obstacles or challenges out ahead of us, we must keep a sense of “awe and boldness” for God’s good plans for Calvin and for our students.

- **Offer encouragement:** Patricia Killen ended by saying, “You are better than you know, and you are braver than you know; do not underestimate the incredible gift that you have been given by God to do this work.” How would our community be different if it were saturated by this kind of encouragement?

Joy and strength to all of you as we move forward into this new semester.

Cheryl Brandsen, provost
**Let’s Do Lunch**

A Faculty and Staff dining space is being piloted this Fall on Mondays and Thursdays. This space is a response to the requests for “a place for faculty and staff to have lunch together”. We heard you and we are excited to test the waters with Let’s Do Lunch on Mondays and Thursdays, 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Bring your lunch or purchase one from Commons or UpperCrust. Drop in for a few minutes or stay the whole time. We will be dining in CM302 (AKA the Knollcrest room) located in Commons across from the UpperCrust on the third floor.

This space is all about community building and connecting with people from across disciplines and job-types. During the month of September, all who attend may enter a drawing at the end of the month for a free lunch in October. We hope you will join us. Let’s Do Lunch is sponsored by David Wunder, Pennlyn Dykstra-Pruim, and Michelle Loyd-Paige.

**From the Faculty Activity Reports**


Be sure to fill out your Faculty Activity Reports regularly. If you have questions, see the FAQ page.

**Kent County Opportunities**

Kent County has several committee openings this year. If you are looking for a way to get involved in service to the local community, applications will be accepted until September 30.

**Coming Up on Campus (Check the campus calendar for a full list of events)**

**Monday, September 9**
- Chapel. Sounds of American folk worship with Luke Enders. 10:00 a.m., Chapel
- Let’s do Lunch. 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., Commons Knollcrest Room (CM 302)
- Asian Studies lecture. Rebekah Hendrian, “From Pohang with Love: An Exchange Student’s Life in South Korea.” 3:30 p.m., Meeter Center Lecture Hall

**Tuesday, September 10**
- Chapel. Introduction to worship in world languages. 10:00 a.m., Chapel
- Cultural Competency Professional Development activity. Emotional Intelligence (EQ) discussion. RSVP here. President’s Conference Room (SC 382), 3:30 p.m.

**Wednesday, September 11**
- Chapel. The Greatest of These: 1 Corinthians 13:4 with David Sung. 10:00 a.m., Chapel

**Thursday, September 12**
- Chapel. Lectio Divina with Sharon Bytwerk and Neil Carlson. 10:00 a.m., Chapel
- Let’s do Lunch. 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., Commons Knollcrest Room (CM 302)
- Mathematics and Statistics Colloquium. Chris Moseley. 3:40 p.m., NH 270

**Friday, September 13**
- Chapel. Student worship team. 10:00 a.m., Chapel