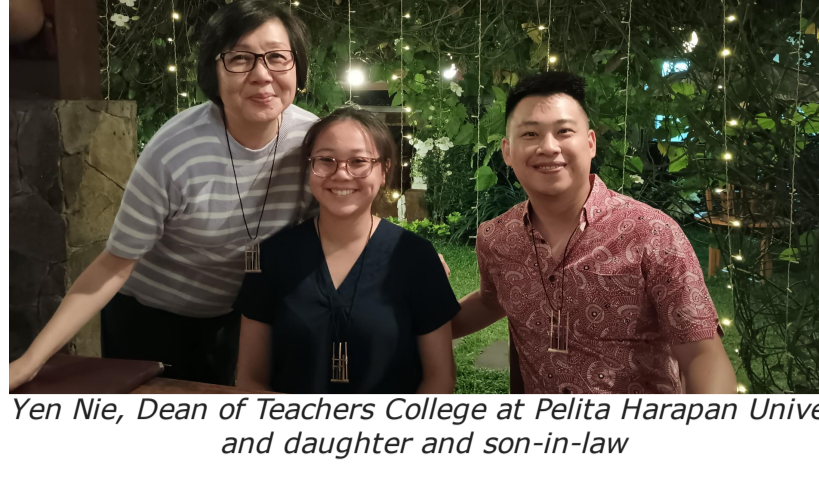


July 2023 Newsletter



Matt Lundberg
Director

A number of items in this newsletter will be about a recent trip I took to east and southeast Asia. While on that trip, a couple of observations kept occurring to me. One is simply how warm, welcoming, and hospitable people were to me. People went out of their way to make me feel at home. I am deeply grateful to the various people that I met and interacted with along the way. For example, on the last leg of the trip, Yen Nie Oh (de Vries Institute advisory council member) and her family were my hosts and guides. They were amazingly generous and kind in how they gave of themselves and their time.



Oh Yen Nie, Dean of Teachers College at Pelita Harapan University and daughter and son-in-law

The second observation was how similar the challenges are that we face globally in Christian higher education. Whether it's tight budgets or faculty burnout; whether it's the inherent complexity of linking faith with learning in wise and natural ways; whether it's negotiating institutional identity amid changing cultures; in all sorts of ways, we seem to be confronting many of the same issues and questions. Of course, there are also differences. The particularities of specific contexts are important—regional, cultural, political, economic, and denominational differences. There were many points along the way where I recognized how far I was from Grand Rapids. Nevertheless, it was the *shared* challenges and opportunities that struck me most. And it was the sincere desire of people I met throughout the trip to tackle those challenges in innovative and faithful ways that came through most strongly.

This experience was a good reminder of the importance of the mission of the de Vries Institute at the current moment of global Christian higher education. The experience also impressed upon me once again how much we at dVI have to learn from efforts around the world. We're in this together, so let's look for ways to work together.

INCHE Conference in Korea



INCHE Conference

The South Korea part of dVI director Matt Lundberg's trip centered on the Asia/Oceania regional conference of the International Network for Christian Higher Education (INCHE). The theme of the conference was "Forming Identity and Building Community" in Christian scholars. J. Richard Middleton, a biblical scholar from Northeastern Seminary and Roberts Wesleyan University in Rochester, NY, delivered the plenary lectures. Middleton took conference attendees on a deep dive into the biblical narrative, showing how an accurate appreciation of our place in the biblical storyline informs the work of teaching and scholarship. Attendees from throughout Asia (and elsewhere in the world) gave presentations on myriad aspects of the work of Christian higher education—from big-picture philosophical and theological topics all the way down to the minutiae of student paper assignments. Matt's presentation focused on the need for intentional processes of faculty formation at Christian institutions in view of the increasingly narrow and technical nature of graduate school training.

The conference showed why INCHE is such a needed and fruitful global network for Christian scholars and institutions. And in all of it, the faculty, staff, and students of Handong Global University were unfailingly generous hosts of the conference.

Faculty Formation in the Philippines, Korea and Indonesia

Prior to the conference in Korea, Matt went to Manila, Philippines. Dr. Joy Pring organized a lunch consultation with a group of leaders from seminaries in the Manila area. The conversation focused on challenges in theological education in this context and the approaches their schools take toward faculty formation. It was especially gratifying to hear about how these seminaries collaborate to form the Asia Graduate School of Theology and its top-notch doctoral training in theology.

Another meeting was with Dr. Theresa Lua (director of the Asian Theological Association) and Dr. Fernando Lua (vice-chancellor and professor at Asian Theological Seminary in Quezon City), discussing the broader state of theological education in Asia and the Asian diaspora in North America.

At the INCHE conference in Korea, Matt also met with various groups at Handong Global University. One of those was a meeting with the Handong Global Mission Institute, directed by Dr. Hye-Ree Hwang. That meeting resulted in the signing of a memorandum of understanding to work toward collaboration related to faculty development needs in universities founded by Korean missionaries in the majority world.



Lunch in Manila hosted by Dr. Pring



Lunch meeting with Dr. Theresa Lua and Dr. Fernando Lua



MOU signed with Handong Global Mission Institute

After the INCHE conference, Matt traveled to Indonesia. The first few days were in Bandung in West Java, where Matt led a daylong workshop on faith and teaching with around 30 scholars from various universities around Indonesia. Dr. Sarinah Lo and the staff of Sekolah Tinggi Teologi Bandung were wonderful hosts for this event.

Matt then gave two lectures at Krida Wacana Christian University in Jakarta, one on the role of mentoring in the formation of new faculty and another to students on Christian ethics and social media. Pak Yanny Mokerowu was an insightful and generous host, and Dr. Denni Sarajih kindly served as a joyful, friendly, and discerning translator.

Finally, Matt led an afternoon workshop with ten of Dean Yen Nie Oh's faculty from the Teachers College at the Universitas Pelita Harapan. This workshop served as the end point for a Reflecting Faith course on Christian faith and pedagogy that this group had been working on together online for the preceding six weeks.



Workshop with Indonesian scholars



Krida Wacana Christian University



Teachers College at Universitas Pelita Harapan

Summer Workshops on the topics of Sin and Artificial Intelligence



Faculty participating in workshop about sin

In early summer, the de Vries Institute sponsored two workshops. The first -- a day long session led by Calvin computer science professor Ken Arnold -- addressed artificial intelligence, which is progressing at an unprecedented rate. AI systems shape how we relate with the broader world: they mediate social relationships, curate perspectives we engage with, and influence the economic opportunities we're given or denied or the medical care we receive, and reshape the work we do, ultimately forming how we view ourselves in relation to others. These emerging technologies, together with the social changes that they have caused, touch every academic discipline. The workshop encouraged participants to think carefully and Christianly about how AI and related technology intersects their discipline.

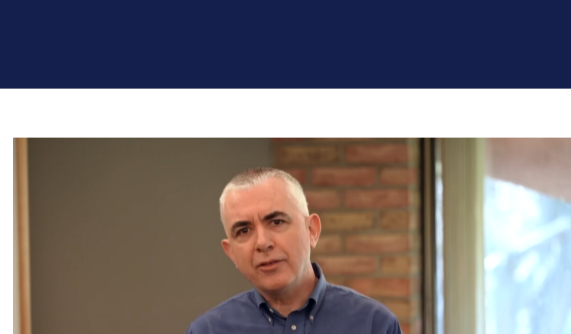
Another group of faculty participated in a workshop titled "Sin: Learning in a Fractured World," using materials developed for a Reflecting Faith course of the same name. Faculty considered questions like: what is sin? How does it affect us and our world? And how does the doctrine of sin relate to our academic disciplines and our teaching and scholarship? The workshop involved extensive group discussion, breaks for individual reading of texts, and consideration of example applications of the topic to various academic areas.

2023 Kuyper Conference

Calvin's annual Kuyper Conference was hosted this year by Redeemer University in Ancaster, Ontario. The centerpiece of the event in early May was the formal awarding of the 2023 Kuyper Prize to artist Makoto Fujimura by presidents Wiebe Boer of Calvin University and Jul Medenblik of Calvin Theological Seminary.

Not only did Fujimura deliver a powerful keynote address, but he also spoke at the opening of "Fearfully and Wonderfully Made," an exhibit of his artwork at the Redeemer gallery (open until October 14, 2023). Staff members from the International Arts Movement led workshops for conference participants on *kintsugi* art.

Additional keynote lectures were delivered by Haejin Shim, John Stackhouse, and Vincent Bacote. And participants in the conference gave presentations on various topics related to neocalvinism. Heartfelt thanks are due to Dr. Jordan Ballor of Calvin for his work planning the conference and Dr. Jessica Jousra of Redeemer's Albert M. Wolters Centre for her work planning and hosting the conference.



Reflecting Faith Promotional Video

Want to learn the basics of what Reflecting Faith is all about? Check out a new promotional video created by Matt Lundberg and David Smith explaining the purpose and structure of Reflecting Faith courses.

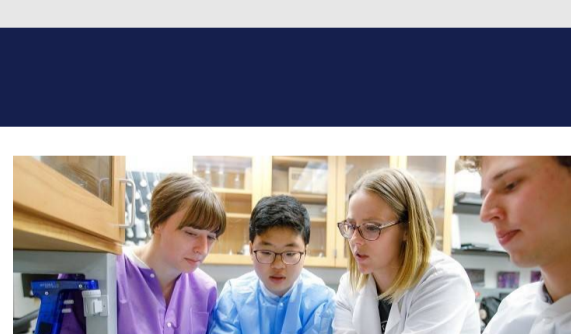
[Reflecting Faith Promotional Video](#)

If you know of Christian scholars or universities that may be interested in using these courses in their faculty development, please send them the link.

October 2024 Conference - Save the Date

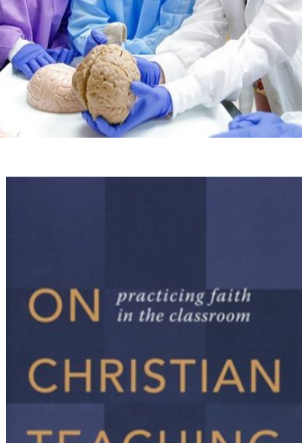
On October 10-12, 2024, the [Kuyers Institute for Christian Teaching and Learning](#), the [International Network for Christian Higher Education](#), and the [de Vries Institute](#) will be co-sponsoring a faith and learning conference on the topic of "Integrated Education in a Reductionist Age." The conference will be held at the Prince Conference Center on the campus of Calvin University.

Kuyers and INCHE have co-hosted conferences in past years. DVI is delighted to be joining in as a third co-organizer of the conference. The plenary speakers and call for papers will be announced in upcoming months.



Faith and STEM Teaching Online Seminar

In anticipation of the in-person conference more than a year away, this coming October, DVI, INCHE, and Kuyers will be hosting an online afternoon workshop on Christian faith and teaching in areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).



This free two-hour Zoom event will be hosted on October 12, 2023, at 3:00pm (Eastern Daylight Time). Panelists from Trinity Christian College and Calvin University will engage with David Smith's award-winning book *On Christian Teaching* from the standpoint of teaching challenges in areas of science and technology. What does Christian commitment look like in the pedagogical approaches chosen in those fields?

All are invited—registration information will be made available soon!

Marking the First Year of Calvin's Postdoctoral Teaching Fellowship Program

We are celebrating a successful first year of the de Vries Postdoctoral Teaching Fellowship program. This two-year program provides an opportunity for newly minted Ph.Ds across various academic disciplines to gain vital teaching experience and participate in an intentional professional development sequence focused on undergraduate instruction and scholarship in the context of Christian faith. Fellows teach 2/3 of a standard full teaching load in academic departments connected to their area of expertise. The remainder of their work responsibilities are devoted to research and faculty development.

To learn more about the first cohort of post-doc fellows and their research interests, check out these articles:

- [Jae Yang](#)
- [Tucker Adkins](#)
- [Michael Dirksen](#)
- [Joe Shin](#)

As we enter into the final year of the first cohort, we will begin the search process for the 2024-2026 cohort. The job advertisement will be posted in fall of 2023.

Other Calvin University Centers & Institutes: Meeter Center

The [H. Henry Meeter Center for Calvin Studies](#) is a research center specializing in John Calvin, Calvinism, the Reformation, and Early Modern Studies. Since opening in 1982, its extensive book, rare book, article, and microform collections have attracted scholars from all over the world.

The Meeter Center sponsors lectures, hosts seminars sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities, awards scholarships to faculty, pastors, graduate students and high school seniors, offers occasional courses on Early Modern French paleography, and hosts events for the Friends of the Meeter Center and the local community throughout the year.

Contact us

Have a question? Contact dvi@calvin.edu.