

## October 2023 Newsletter



Matt Lundberg  
Director

One of the highlights of my professional life over the past year has been working with the first cohort of de Vries Postdoctoral Teaching Fellows. I have met weekly with these four teacher-scholars. Together we've thought about good teaching—what does it look like? what role does faith play in transformative teaching? We considered what it looks like to be Christians as scholars—how should faith figure into the life of research? what pitfalls should be avoided at that important intersection? And we've thought about what faithful learning communities should look like—what is our role as citizens of the institutions we inhabit?

In spending time with these four scholars fresh from their Ph.D studies, I have been blessed with the opportunity to think with fresh eyes about the project of Christian higher education. What does it really look like to approach our academic labor as disciples of Jesus Christ? What patterns, practices, and habits of mind are crucial for younger scholars to flourish as Christians as they establish the trajectories for their academic career?

Most of all, I have enjoyed spending time with these four quality people who are also striving to be people of faith in their work. Since we're past the halfway point of their time at Calvin, it's easy for me to get a bit emotional. I have to remind myself that we still have the better part of a year together!

At the same time, we are preparing for their successors as we begin the search process for the second cohort of de Vries postdocs (more information below). Please do us the favor of spreading the word about this job opportunity in your networks of influence!

## Christian Faith and STEM Teaching Online Workshop

The award-winning 2018 book *On Christian Teaching* written by David Smith (who directs Calvin University's Kuyers Institute and has a coordinator role in the de Vries Institute) challenged instructors to consider how Christian faith can inform both the content of our teaching *and* our pedagogical choices. Several faculty members from two universities subsequently considered how faith should shape their teaching in STEM fields such as biology, computer science, engineering, mathematics, and nursing, resulting in a co-authored journal article. What challenges did they confront as Christian teachers? How are they attempting to respond to those challenges in their teaching? What is the Christian rationale behind their pedagogical choices?

Join us for an online workshop on Thursday, Oct 12, 3:00-5:00 p.m. (EDT) as these panelists reflect on teaching faithfully in STEM areas. The webinar will include a plenary panel, a response by David Smith, and breakout discussions led by the contributors to the article. After the workshop, a recording will be available to registered participants. [Register!](#)

Panelists, in the order pictured below:

- **Tina Decker** (Trinity Christian College)—associate professor of nursing
- **Fred Haan** (Calvin University)—professor of engineering
- **Vic Norman** (Calvin University)—associate professor of computer science
- **Abbie Schrottenboer** (Trinity Christian College)—associate professor of biology
- **Jim Turner** (Calvin University)—professor of mathematics



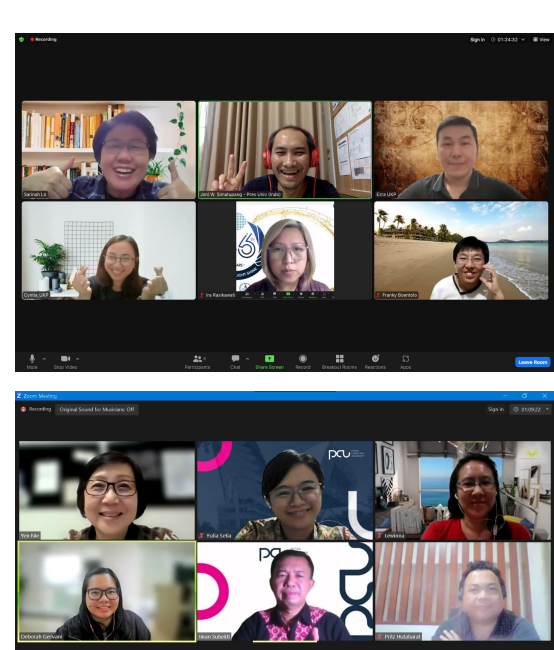
This event is co-sponsored by the de Vries Institute, the [Kuyers Institute for Christian Teaching and Learning](#), and the [International Network for Christian Higher Education](#).

## 2024-26 De Vries Postdoctoral Teaching Fellows Cohort

The [de Vries Postdoctoral Teaching Fellowship](#) at Calvin University 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 teaching and scholarship. This professional development sequence gives sustained attention to the project of connecting Christian faith commitments to every aspect of academic work.

De Vries Postdoctoral Fellows teach 2/3 of a standard full teaching load in academic departments connected to their area of expertise. The remaining 1/3 of fellows' work responsibilities is devoted to their professional development as rising members of the academy. This includes work with an experienced faculty mentor and regular sessions on topics such as teaching, grading, students, scholarship, institutional life, and wise, impactful integration of faith and learning in all of those dimensions of faculty work.

Our current cohort of four fellows will complete their work at the end of the 2023-24 academic year, and we are now accepting applications for the 2024-26 cohort. [Apply online](#) or spread the word to those who may be interested.



## The Bandung Collective

This past June, De Vries Institute director Matt Lundberg led a day-long workshop on Christian faith and teaching in Bandung, West Java, Indonesia. With participants coming from numerous institutions across Indonesia, the group had a wonderful day together. A shared commitment to quality teaching and *faithful* teaching was evident throughout the room.

Subsequently, workshop organizers Sarinah Lo and Yen Nie Oh have continued to lead Zoom conversations with members of this group of scholars about how Christian faith can inform challenges they face as teachers.

Sarinah and Yen Nie will soon be leading members of this group, as well as other Indonesian Christian lecturers, in [Reflecting Faith](#) courses developed by the de Vries Institute.

## Calvin Adjunct Faculty Development

Enfolding adjunct faculty into university communities can be challenging, particularly for those teaching online. Most adjunct instructors are adding the course they are teaching to a busy life, usually in addition to a full-time job.

This past summer Calvin's Dean for Faculty Development, David Wunder, began brainstorming with de Vries Institute director Matt Lundberg about ways to invest in adjunct faculty at Calvin, both to create new forms of community for them and to support their important work in faith and learning integration. Those discussions led to a group of 18 adjunct faculty taking a [Reflecting Faith](#) course, *Humanity in God's Image*, in September and October.

Discussions among this group of instructors have been rich and fruitful - so fruitful that a second course on *Sin: Learning in a Fractured World* will launch in October for another group of adjunct instructors at Calvin.

These courses are available for use at institutions around the world. To inquire about using these courses for cohorts from your university, reach out to us at [dvi@calvin.edu](mailto:dvi@calvin.edu).



Conference speakers and organizers



Matt with Joshua Amaezochi, president of the LEMA Institute

## Conference in Uganda

In September, de Vries Institute director Matt Lundberg participated in a conference in Soroti, Uganda, that focused on forming Christian leaders to think in faithful ways about all aspects of life and work.

The conference was sponsored by the [LEMA Institute](#), which has established seminaries in Nigeria and Uganda. Matt gave a plenary lecture on the theological foundations of Christian social and political engagement and offered multiple workshops on Christ-centered creation care.

If there is one message that came through in all of the lectures and workshops, delivered by leaders from Uganda, Nigeria, Kenya, and the United States, it is that Sunday has everything to do with the rest of the week—work, family, the marketplace, culture, and politics.

Christian higher education and Christian ministry are intended to equip Christians to be faithful citizens in all that they do.

## 2024 Kuyper Conference - Save the Date

Join participants from across the globe at the Kuyper Conference, which will be hosted at Calvin University's Prince Conference Center on April 2-4, 2024.

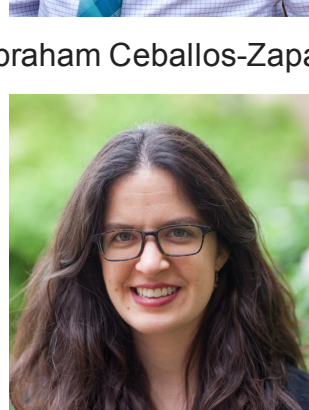
Scholars, pastors, ministry professionals, laypeople, and civic leaders will participate in plenary sessions, panel discussions, and short paper sessions. Participants will explore the many ways that Abraham Kuyper's legacy informs the contemporary world. The conference will also feature the awarding of the 2024 Kuyper Prize. The Kuyper conference also overlaps with the first day of the [Henry Symposium on Religion and Public Life](#).

Begun in 1998 at Princeton Theological Seminary, the conference was founded to acknowledge the stream of Calvinist thought represented by Abraham Kuyper, Dutch theologian and statesman (1837-1920), and to explore the tradition he helped to form, commonly known as neocalvinism.

The conference theme, call for papers, and registration information will be released soon. When available, it will be posted [here](#).



Abraham Ceballos-Zapata



Clair Mesick

## Reading Recommendations

One of the core programs of the de Vries Institute on Calvin's campus is a Faith & Learning Fellowship for newer faculty members. Typically completed during their 2nd and 4th years of service on the Calvin faculty, these professors participate in a program of mentorship, guided reading, cohort discussion, and independent reading and writing.

We recently asked two of our 2022-23 4th Year participants to share a reading suggestion from their time in the program:

- Abraham Ceballos-Zapata (world languages): "The book *Contesting Languages: Heteroglossia and the Politics of Language in the Early Church* by Indonesian theologian Ekaputra Tupamahu is an invitation to read the Bible with the eyes of an immigrant. His sociolinguistic analysis of the early church is illuminating and as a Professor of Spanish, I was inspired by his call to imagine multilingualism as a radical space for hospitality."
- Clair Mesick (religion): "I picked up Krista Tippett's *Becoming Wise* on a whim and it has ended up being my favorite book for the fellowship. Tippett includes interviews with a surprising number of biblical scholars, theologians, and Christian ethicists (along with physicists, activists, poets, political leaders, and spiritual leaders from other religions) who speak on the connection between their work and their faith and practice. It's a wonderful example of dialoguing intelligently with people from a variety of different disciplines, and Tippett weaves those disparate interviews into a sustained narrative in a way that is always thought-provoking and often profound."

## 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. Plenary speakers include:

- Katie Kresser, art historian from Seattle Pacific University
- Justin Ariel Bailey, theologian from Dordt University
- Matt Kaemingk, theologian from Fuller Theological Seminary

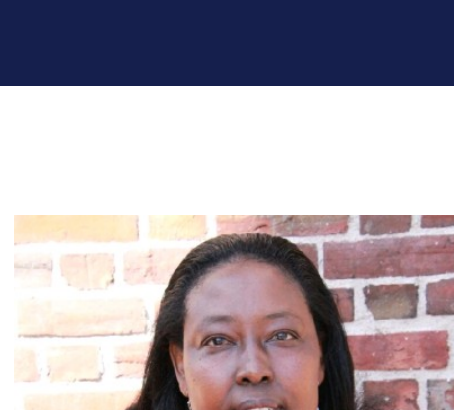
Kuyers and INCHE have co-hosted conferences in past years. DVI is delighted to be joining in as a third co-organizer of the conference. The call for papers and registration information will be announced in early 2024.

## Other Calvin University Centers & Institutes: The Nagel Institute for the Study of World Christianity

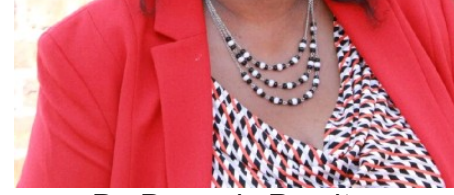
Calvin's [Nagel Institute](#) is an educational research institute focused on ways in which the study of World Christianity can change perspectives, foster knowledge, and reinvigorate Christian thought and practice.

Through a network of communal learning, the Nagel Institute anticipates current and future trends in their greatest areas of impact, engaging in regions where the greatest opportunity for learning exists, like Brazil, China, and Africa. By listening to Christian voices from around the world, it uncovers new insights and expands knowledge to a more global view of the Christian faith. Critical to the institute's mission is sharing learning through the free dissemination of insights to benefit society by accelerating the pace of discovery, reducing information-sharing gaps, encouraging innovation, and promoting reproducibility.

Nagel's new director, Dr. Damaris Parsitau, also serves on the de Vries Institute advisory council. Dr. Parsitau has over 25 years of experience in teaching, research and leadership in a variety of universities and policy institutions in Africa and beyond. She has conducted numerous research projects and published over 70 book chapters and articles. Her interests include World Christianity and its intersection with women's leadership. She is a proponent of using evidence-based research for effective policy action.



Dr. Damaris Parsitau



## Contact us

Have a question? Contact [dvi@calvin.edu](mailto:dvi@calvin.edu).