

The Academic Bulletin

from the Office of the Provost of Calvin University

Friday, April 23, 2021

An Irish Blessing

Most of my friends know that I am absolutely loopy about anything Irish. I am likely to try, and enjoy, all kinds of things with an Irish prefix: music, poetry, film, TV, sweaters, etc. If you don't believe me, I recommend Derry Girls, Padraig O'Tuama, and Elias Kennedy. I have been fortunate to visit Ireland twice, first on our 10th wedding anniversary (where several people asked us if we were on our honeymoon). Our second trip was with our two girls, around our 20th wedding anniversary (and not a solitary person thought Mike and I were on our honeymoon). The lonely vistas and roads of the western coast of Ireland have a downright magical ability to sink into your soul and restore it, or as Yeats would more beautifully say, "And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow."

Since those incredible scenes will have to wait, I will content myself with an Irish poem. I have been reminded of Seamus Heaney's poem "Scaffolding" of late. This is typically seen as a wedding poem (I read this poem at my daughter's wedding). But it also reminds me of Calvin, or at least, of how difficult it has seemed to build the required scaffolding to complete our work this year. Our only constants this year seemed to be uncertainty and a fight against weariness. Using Heaney's language, my planks felt slippery and my ladders weren't always secure. It wasn't the year that any of us wanted, and the challenges seem intent on stubbornly remaining. But the bridge didn't break, and our scaffolds are holding. Our students were served and taught this year. We all learned capacities we never knew we had, and the necessity of, and then the joy of, leaning more heavily on each other. There is so much gratitude in my heart for the strange looking, but sturdy wall that we all have built this year.

Scaffolding

Masons, when they start upon a building,
Are careful to test out the scaffolding;

Make sure that planks won't slip at busy points,
Secure all ladders, tighten bolted joints.

And yet all this comes down when the job's done
Showing off walls of sure and solid stone.

So if, my dear, there sometimes seem to be
Old bridges breaking between you and me

Never fear. We may let the scaffolds fall
Confident that we have built our wall.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fNYBwF7lKLA>

Laura DeHaan, dean for academic administration

Online Course Evaluations Have been Launched

Course evaluation forms have been sent to students via email. Here are some helpful tips to make the evaluation process a success:

- Make time during class for students to complete the evaluation. This greatly improves response rates.
- Ask students to check their email for a message from “Course Evaluations” that includes links to evaluations for each of their classes.
- Tell students that their responses are completely anonymous, and that you will only see results after grades are released.
- Tell the students in your own words how useful the evaluations are for helping you improve the course.

Going over this information at the start of the evaluation period will set the stage for a strong response rate in your classes and for Calvin as a whole. To log in to the system, go to smartevals.com and use your Calvin credentials.

From the Faculty Activity Reports

- **Anding Shen** (Biology), “Vaccines—Our Answer to a Pandemic?” (lecture, American Scientific Affiliation Seminar—Virtual, December 20, 2020).
- **Dwight TenHuisen** (World Languages), “Diego Ortiz’s Martyrdom and Competing Visions of New World Evangelization” (lecture, Renaissance Society of America Annual Conference—Virtual, New York City, New York, April 20, 2021).
- **Kevin Timpe** (Philosophy), *The Virtues: A Very Short Introduction*, with Craig Boyd (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021).

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

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

Monday, April 26

- Chapel. [Sounds of Indonesian worship](#). 10:00 a.m.
- Blood Drive. 12:00 noon–7:00 p.m., Hoogenboom Gymnasium

Tuesday, April 27

- Chapel. [Songs and Prayers with the worship apprentices](#). 10:00 a.m.
- Blood Drive. 12:00 noon–7:00 p.m., Hoogenboom Gymnasium

Wednesday, April 28

- Chapel. [Mary Hulst, Luke 24:13–35, “Jesus Shows Up to the Worried and Confused.”](#) 10:00 a.m.
- Blood Drive. 12:00 noon–7:00 p.m., Hoogenboom Gymnasium
- History Department colloquium. Student research presentations. 3:30 p.m., Meeter Center Lecture Hall (must [register](#) to attend in-person) or [virtual](#)

Thursday, April 29

- Chapel. [Taizé Music with Karen Saupe and Chad Engbers](#). 10:00 a.m.

Friday, April 30

- [Student worship team outdoors on commons lawn](#). 10:00 a.m.
- Biology Department seminar—[Virtual](#). Paul Calle, “Wildlife and Human Intersections in the Emergence of Zoonotic Diseases.” 1:30 p.m.
- GEO seminar—[Virtual](#). Steven Johnson (Eastern Mennonite U.), “Beneath Vernal Ponds: Documenting Life in Temporary Ponds from the Perspective of a Conservation Photographer.” 3:30 p.m.
- Peet’s Gathering for Faculty and Staff. Library Patio. 3:30–5:00 p.m.