

To CRCNA Region 3 Classes,

Before I begin my report on the February 2020 Calvin University Board of Trustee meeting, I want reflect on how much the world has changed since our meeting only a month and a half ago and how Calvin has responded to COVID-19. Federal, state, and local governments are changing policies and guidelines by the day, and Calvin's administration is following these changes very carefully. In very quick succession, Calvin has had to make very difficult decisions around its operations in response to COVID-19. Major policies include:

- Calvin has moved all classes online for the rest of the semester.
- Residence halls have been closed for the rest of the semester. Some students will be granted special permission to remain on campus in extenuating circumstances.
- Calvin has developed policies around partial room and board refunds and credits.
- Access to non-residential buildings will be restricted to staff whose work is required to provide essential services to the campus.

You can find other FAQs about Calvin's response to COVID-19 on the website.

Please continue to pray for wisdom and peace for the administration, faculty, and staff as they have made and will continue to make difficult decisions in light of the developments surrounding COVID-19. Like many non-profits, businesses, and other organizations, Calvin will suffer significant financial losses.

Most certainly, please pray for the students, as they are significantly impacted by these changes, and like many of us, are likely afraid of what this means for their future. Pray that God can grant the Calvin community moments of clarity, hope, and even joy during these unprecedented times.

### ***February 2020 Board Update***

The Calvin University Board of Trustees convened on February 6-7. After a greeting from the President and a report from the Chair, the board engaged in a development session focusing on the Freedom of Expression Philosophy at Calvin.

The board development session started by viewing excerpts from Jonathan Haidt's January Series presentation on "The Coddling of the American Mind: How Good Intentions and Bad Ideas are Setting Up a Generation for Failure." Haidt's presentation on moral psychology and the rise of a generation armed that is perceived to have less resiliency opened to a panel discussion on the topic and how Calvin can encourage a thriving environment through freedom of expression.

Michael Le Roy then thanked trustees for their service before sharing his report on the Calvin Global Campus (working name) and Calvin's chosen online program manager, Wiley Education Service, through which Calvin plans to launch 14 online programs between now and 2023. He also shared that the generosity of Calvin's supporters will make 2019-2020 a record year for fundraising and communicated work being done on the university structure, enrollment, and budget preparation.

Trustees then heard an update on Commons Union plans from the team of architects working on the project. The plans originally came in \$14 million over budget; at Calvin's urging, they have been reworking the plans to make the building stronger, leaner, and true to budget. The architects still have

work to do, but they've been able to take \$13.4 million from costs thus far by reorganizing square footage, re-evaluating the energy plant, conducting soil compaction tests to support normal foundation usage, and focusing on building sustainability.

The second half of the morning was geared towards determining if Calvin is on the right track regarding the Reformed Christian Witness faculty document. The document highlights the covenant, Christian education, and church membership requirements for Calvin's faculty. University administration and trustees gathered at tables to discuss the document and afterwards provided feedback to the group.

Overall, the board supports the document, but it was noted that more work needs to be done. These ideas were intended be shared with faculty and focus groups of pastors during the month of March, though these plans will be altered due to COVID-19. Our goal is to maintain and sustain faculty requirements that deepen and strengthen our Reformed Christian witness. We believe that these improvements do just that and provide the evidence we need as we develop faculty and staff to fulfill our Christian mission for the future.

Friday afternoon was spent on committee reports and motions. A brief synopsis follows:

- Academic Affairs: the motion for faculty reappointments with tenure was approved, and the motion for five-year renewable-term appointments was approved as well. They also reported on academic program assessment and the university structure.
- Student Life: the trustees heard about a day in the life of residence life staff as well as an update on the Commons Union, Calvin LifeWork, Title IX, and organizational structures.
- Advancement: the motion to realign the language in the Gift Acceptance Policy and Procedures was approved. Current dollars in the door are > \$26.2 million.
- Enrollment Strategy: the committee shared what is being done by the enrollment strategy division to increase enrollment (targeting specific markets, increasing high school visits, etc.).
- Audit: the committee provided an update on cyber security efforts and noted that the Workday implementation goal for finance and human resources is June 30. Interestingly, Calvin blocks ~30,000 cyber events per day.
- Administration and Finance: the motion to set the 2020-2021 budget was approved as well as the motion for a fundraising feasibility study for an outdoor athletic field and facility. The estimated deficit, interim tuition proposal, and investment performance were all reviewed, with investments coming in at ~16% over the year.
- Trusteeship: the committee recommended that the February 2021 meeting will pilot as a virtual meeting.

Trustee Tom Wybenga closed the meeting before trustees went into executive session by noting that God makes His mark on each of us and noted that this should give us confidence as we go about His work.

As I pray for Calvin, I will also pray for you and your congregations during these uncertain times.

Sincerely,

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