A Message from Calvin Theological Seminary President Jul Medenblik

At the Synod of 2010, I was interviewed and affirmed as the 7th President of Calvin Theological Seminary. That Synod was held at Trinity Christian College, about a half hour drive from the church where I was the founding pastor – New Life Church in New Lenox, Illinois.

At the morning session after I was affirmed as President-Elect, the children of New Life were part of the opening devotions. They played in a bell choir and we joined our voices on the songs they helped lead. I saw children I had baptized as their pastor, and as I thought about my transition away from them I cried.

Later that day, Calvin Theological Seminary students were introduced as candidates for the ministry of the Christian Reformed Church. I saw these students on the edge of being called to the church and I gave thanks to God for His prompting me to remember that I was still going to minister to children. I gave thanks for these “children of the church”.

One of the joys I experience is meeting students and learning their stories. They come from communities of faith and it takes a supportive community for these “children of the church” to take their next step in following the calling of God upon their lives.

I want to especially thank you for your part in The Presidents’ Legacy Society. You are helping us form a supportive community for these children as well. As a small thank you, this issue of our Legacy Society newsletter is filled with encouragement on the topic of family. Thank you for the “family of faith” that is encouraging the next generation of students at Calvin Theological Seminary. May God be praised!

Serving the Lord with you,

Julius Medenblik
President, Calvin Theological Seminary

Legacy Society Website
Have you explored our special Legacy website yet? Visit www.calvinseminary.edu/giving/legacy-society

- Stories of faith - test monies from Legacy members like you
- Articles to help you maximize your resources God’s way
- Gift planning tools to protect and provide for your family and the ministries you love!
- Helpful answers to some of the most popular planned giving questions.
The Power of a Good Story
Dr. Gary Schmidt Addresses Legacy Society Members

“This is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior, all the day long…”

These words were sung as 120 of our Legacy members gathered for the second annual Presidents’ Legacy Society event on May 8, 2013, featuring our keynote speaker Dr. Gary Schmidt. President Medenblik welcomed everyone and offered a word of prayer. After enjoying conversation over brunch, Dr. Schmidt pointed out that each of us has a different story to tell, and encouraged us to share it with those in our lives. What is unique about your story is how you have included Calvin Seminary in it. Not only are you able to include us in your story today but you are able to continue doing so by leaving your legacy with the Calvin Seminary community. Gathering as a group of believers who support our mission is a blessing, so thank you for your role in our community.

Recommended Resource
Jesus and Money
Ben Witherington III

Recognized twice by Christianity Today as one of the top “biblical studies” authors in the U.S., New Testament scholar Ben Witherington recently released a timely book in the wake of a challenging financial environment to help Christians rethink their approach to money, using God’s Word as a guide. While highlighting the wisdom found in the Old Testament regarding money and possessions, Witherington urges a New Testament theology of stewardship and giving—guided in part by the Lord’s Prayer. Readers are urged to “de-program” themselves from the culture, and recognize that financial resources are given to us in order to support our families, help people in need, and advance the gospel message.

Low Interest Rates Signal A Good Time to Give

As was announced in March, the Federal Reserve intends to keep interest rates low through 2015, in an effort to grow the economy and drive down unemployment. For obvious reasons, low interest rate environments can be very attractive to borrowers. However, if you are relying on investments for income, it can be quite concerning. Interest rates on CDs, money market accounts and other fixed-income investments have plummeted, resulting in significantly lower incomes for many retired people. For people looking to supplement their income, a Charitable Gift Annuity is an attractive option. With a gift annuity, a donor makes a gift, receives a charitable deduction for a portion of the gift and receives an income for life, part of which is tax-free. The rates for gift annuities in many cases are significantly higher than the interest an individual could get from a CD or other fixed income investment.

For more information on the most advantageous giving arrangement for you, contact Barnabas Foundation at 1-888-448-3040 or www.barnabasfoundation.com.
The Paradox of Prosperity  Source: www.generousgiving.org

Christian financial counselor Ron Blue explains that the early years of marriage with his wife Judy were very humble. Ron jokes that the trailer they lived in was so small, “you could sit on the pot, make dinner and do the ironing without moving.” Life was fairly simple at that point, Ron observed, because they had few choices: they didn’t have to decide what clothes they were going to buy, what cars they were going to purchase, where they were going to go on vacation, or what they were going to do for their children’s college education or their retirement. Many years later, with five children and six grandchildren, life became far more complex than they had ever imagined.

Ron and Judy sought the advice of a couple in their 80s, and asked them if it got any easier. They responded, “It doesn’t get any easier. It gets harder because the older your kids get, the older your grandkids get, the bigger their problems are and the less influence you have to solve those problems.”

Life becomes more complex the older you get and the wealthier you become. It doesn’t get easier. That is a paradox that we have been led to believe: If I can accumulate enough, my life will become simple. But the Bible reminds us in James 1:9-12 that although our material wealth is uncertain, eternal values such as humility and perseverance will endure: “The brother in humble circumstances ought to take pride in his high position. But the one who is rich should take pride in his low position...the rich man will fade away even while he goes about his business. Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.”

What a wonderful promise! May the Lord find us faithful with our families, our lives and our wealth.

Legacy Partner Testimonial

“Fifty years ago, with deep faith and a strong belief, we began our marriage and committed our lives to Christ through our love. Love brought us together and we knew that our future had to be built on a life of believing, trusting, worshiping and service to our Lord and Savior.

Our experience was, with believing parents, that there were the strong roots of the Christian faith, Christian Reformed Church background, and Christian schools. We asked God to give us the stamina to stay on course, the means to afford the cost, and a legacy we could pass on to our children and grandchildren.

As we look back on these 50 years, we have stumbled and fallen many times, but God has been faithful to us. He picked us up, forgave us, and blessed us with a believing family. Our belief today is to leave this world with a legacy that focuses on education; education in academics with a strong temperance in our lives of complete surrender to the Lord of our life, namely Jesus Christ our Savior. This will not happen unless we invest in leadership within our families and our Church. Calvin Seminary is building leadership for our tomorrow, and the excitement on campus is contagious. The leadership is true to His direction, so take your time, talent and treasure and become involved in today’s force for tomorrow’s leaders.”

“This is why we belong to and support the Presidents’ Legacy Society.”

Roger & Sandy Alderink
A Great Way to Give!

Did you know you can contribute part of your IRA to Calvin Theological Seminary tax free? The IRA Charitable Rollover extension makes it possible to provide tax-free gifts from your IRA to ministry organizations such as Calvin Seminary.

- Gifts are tax free up to $100,000 per year.
- IRA holder must be 70 1/2 or older.
- Gifts will qualify for all or part of required minimum distributions.
- Gifts must be an outright gift to a charitable organization.
- Gifts may only be made from traditional IRAs and Roth IRAs.
- IRA gifts must be completed by December 31, 2013.

To see if you qualify, review Frequently Asked Questions, or to discover how the changes could affect your Income and Estate taxes, please click the “Individuals” tab at www.barnabasfoundation.com. Or feel free to contact Barnabas Foundation toll-free at 1-888-448-3040.