“No one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 3:11).

The text above served as the centerpiece of my inauguration as the tenth president of Western Theological Seminary. Since that October evening in 1994, this text has served as a constant reminder that the foundation of our institution was laid by God long before I was born, and that I was simply one of many faithful builders over the years.

During the past fourteen years it has been my privilege to serve with a skilled, gifted and dedicated group of faculty, staff and trustees who have built on that foundation and “constructed another floor” of this institution which has prepared leaders for the church since 1866.

This summer I will complete my presidency, and after a semester’s sabbatical I will begin teaching full time at Western as the Marvin and Jerene DeWitt Professor of Church History. Dr. Timothy Brown, my friend and our long-time professor of preaching, will be my successor in the president’s office. He is eager and able to build upon our sure foundation, who is Jesus Christ.

Recently people have asked me what I will miss most about being the president. Invariably, I respond that I will miss the public responsibilities which came with the office. I have thoroughly enjoyed meeting and greeting people across the church. It has been a joyful privilege to preach for scores of congregations, to dine with those who love Christ’s church, to tell about the mission of the seminary, and, yes, to solicit financial support, prospective students and prayers for the community of faith and learning that I came to love and cherish.

Please accept my deep gratitude for your prayers and your support. You have sustained our ministry as we have built upon the foundation of Jesus Christ. I am confident that you will continue to support Western under the leadership of Dr. Tim Brown.

Cordially and gratefully, in Christ,

A Note from President Dennis N. Voskuil

Frederick “Fritz” Kruithof ’64
by Bob Terwilliger ’72

I. John Hesselink ’53
by Eugene Vander Well ’53

Fritz was vice-president of the Regional Synod of the Great Lakes in 1998, the vice-president of General Synod in 1997-98, and President of General Synod in 1998-99. He received the Hope College Distinguished Alumnus Award in 1999 and has served on the Hope College Board of Trustees since 1991.

“Everybody just loves him.” That’s what you’ll hear when you talk to people who attended churches he served. You’ll hear it from those who worked with him at the classis, regional synod, or denominational level. Everybody loves the man with the shock of white hair, the warm personality, the outgoing spirit, the hearty and ready laugh, and the deep love of God and God’s church at the core of his life.

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A Man for All Seasons is an apt description of I. John Hesselink. He is first and foremost a theologian who knows his namesake, John Calvin, almost as well as he knows himself. He was a personal acquaintance of theologians Emil Brunner and Karl Barth. But John also is an avid sports fan, ever faithful to the Detroit Tigers and the Hope College basketball and football teams. He loves music ranging from classical to jazz, and reads the sports page and news magazines, as well as good literature and poetry. He admires Japanese prints, which he and his wife Etta have collected through the years. His vocational career includes missionary, teacher, seminary president and professor, and scholar.

For a person with such broad interests and capabilities, John had a humble beginning. He is the son of a Midwest RCA pastor, grew up in the church, and confessed his faith in Christ at the tender age of twelve. Two years later John was deeply saddened by the premature death of his mother. He attended high school in Pella, Iowa, where he says he did every-

Distinguished Alumni of 2008

John and Etta (center) are commissioned as missionaries at General Synod held at Central College, May 1953.
Nominations for Distinguished Alumni/ae

Who do you recommend?

Do you know a Western Theological Seminary Alum who should be considered for the Distinguished Alumni/ae Award?

If so, please submit a ministry biography and the reasons you believe this person should be recognized as a Distinguished Alum.

Nominations for each year are due by October 31 of the previous year. The members of the Alumni/ae Council carefully consider each person nominated and make their decision in November.

Send your nomination to:
Rev. Bruce Weirks
Western Theological Seminary
101 E. 13th St.
Holland, MI 49423

or email: bruce@westernsem.edu

2007-2008

The Council

Donald DeYoung ’55, President
Mike VanDoornik ’60, Vice President & Necrologist
Norman Ratering ’62, Secretary
Barbara Boss ’05
Harold DeRoo ’48
Paul Fazio ’93
Roger Kleinheksel ’63
Bruce Mulder ’99
Deborah Swanson ’07
Norm Swier ’77
James VanderRoest ’92
Gerard VanHeest ’52

Frederick “Fritz” Kruithof ‘64

Fritz was born to Dr. Bastian and Marie Kruithof, and as the son of a pastor and college professor, he had the opportunity to move around more than most. His early years were spent in New Jersey, but then the family moved to Holland, Michigan. Fritz served as president of his 8th grade class at Holland Christian, a precursor of things to come. His first two years of high school were in Edinburgh, Scotland, where Fritz played rugby.

He returned to Grand Rapids to finish his education at Wyoming Park High School.

Fritz attended Hope College, where he won the Pietenpol Prize, showing promise in ministry. As a senior, he was elected class president. At Western Seminary, Fritz was again elected president, this time of the senior class. What is this thing with Fritz and presidencies?

Fritz married Sharon Lee Weaver in 1963, and together they set off on a career of ministry in the Reformed Church. Sharon is a trained nurse and certified grief counselor, and along with other church responsibilities through the years, she helped in both those capacities. In the early years of ministry she taught Vacation Bible School, Sunday School, and Youth Club. She led Bible studies, helped with youth leadership, directed youth choirs, and served on various classical committees. The Kruithofs have three sons, Kirk, Brad, and Ryan; a daughter-in-law, Pam, and three granddaughters, Maggie and twins Kara and Molly.

Ordained in the Classis of Philadelphia, Fritz started his ministry at Talmage Memorial Reformed Church. He went on to serve five churches in Michigan, serving a total of 36 years as solo pastor or head of staff. Since 2006, Fritz has been the Calling Pastor for Bethany in Kalamazoo as well as one of the Senior Pastors for the Reformed Church, calling on retired ministers and spouses in Michigan.

For the past 20 years, Fritz has been in a collegial relationship and accountability group with Dave Bruininkes, Jim Baax, Daryl Vetter, and Larry Terdouw.

Throughout his years of distinguished ministry, people have come to know Fritz Kruithof as the man everyone loves. In return, he demonstrates on a daily basis his love for others, his love for God, and his love for Christ’s church. And by that, people know that he is one of God’s precious disciples.

Fritz Kruithof
b. Paterson, NJ 10/19/39
Hope College ’61, WTS ’64
Reformed churches served:
(1964-1967) Talmage Memorial, Philadelphia, PA
(1967-1969) Faith, Muskegon, MI
(1969-1974) Church of the Master, Warren, MI
(1974-1978) Rememberance, Grand Rapids, MI
(1979-1991) Hope, South Haven, MI
(1991-2000) Second, Kalamazoo, MI
(2000-2005) Minister Congregational Care, Christ Memorial, Holland, MI
(2006-) Calling Pastor, Bethany, Kalamazoo, MI
(2006-) Senior Pastor, RCA

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Norm Swier ’77
James VanderRoest ’92
Gerard VanHeest ’52
I. John Hesselink ‘53

(continued from page 1)

I. John Hesselink

b. Grand Rapids, MI 3/21/28
Central College ’50, WTS ’53
Basel University, Switzerland, D.Theol. ’61
(1953-1973) Missionary to Japan
(1961-1973) Professor of Historical Theology, Tokyo Union Seminary
(1973-1985) President, Western Theological Seminary
(1986-1998) Albertus C. Van Raalte Professor of Systematic Theology, Western Theological Seminary
(1998-present) Professor emeritus, Western Theological Seminary
(1995-1996) President, General Synod, RCA
Honorary degrees: Hope College LHD, Central College DD

John entered Central College uncertain about his vocational goals, but he unexpectedly heard the call to missionary service his freshman year. John arranged to interview a mission executive visiting the campus. She asked him how long he had been considering becoming a missionary, and John replied, “I never thought of it.” The seed was planted that day, and later he considered his call confirmed when he met his future wife, Etta Ter Louw, who felt called to be a missionary since childhood.

John entered New Brunswick Seminary and later transferred to Western Seminary, where his appetite for theology was whet by Dr. Osterhaven’s classes in systematic theology. After graduating with honors he and Etta headed for Japan where John engaged in student evangelism. While teaching Bible in a Tokyo high school five of his students became Christians, one of whom later became a pastor. John also taught in a Japanese prison where he baptized three condemned criminals before they were executed. During their first term in Japan John became acquainted with Emil Brunner who was serving as a visiting professor at the International Christian University. After five years John went to Basel, Switzerland to study with Karl Barth. They became close friends even with their theological differences. John was instrumental in arranging for a historic encounter between Barth and Brunner that effected a personal reconciliation.

After completing his doctorate, John and his family returned to Japan, where he taught theology at Tokyo Union Seminary. In 1973 Dr. Hesselink was invited to be the president of Western Seminary. Assisted by his secretary and a business manager, John toured the churches and raised $4 million for the new Cook Center library and the endowment. In 1985 he returned to teaching fulltime in the chair of A. C. Van Raalte Professor of Systematic Theology. His passion for Reformed theology was matched by his warm concern for his students.

Dr. Hesselink retired from the seminary in 1998 but continues to be active in a variety of ways. He especially enjoys mentoring overseas graduate students and helping them with their theses. He has served as visiting professor at two Japanese seminaries and has lectured in a host of other countries. John continues to preach and teach in local churches and is active in his own congregation, Third Reformed of Holland.

He has authored five books, three on Calvin. His most popular book is the very readable *On Being Reformed*, which has been translated into Japanese, Korean, and Chinese.

I. John Hesselink’s children celebrate Nathan’s graduation from Interlochen Arts Academy, June 1984.

Judson, Gregory, Ann, Nathan, and John III.

Hesselink’s children celebrate Nathan’s graduation from Interlochen Arts Academy, June 1984.

Judson, Gregory, Ann, Nathan, and John III.

John & Etta Hesselink

Seminary Dean Elton Eemigenberg changes Dr. Hesselink as president of Western Theological Seminary, Inauguration service at Third Reformed, September 1973.

Dr. Hesselson’s first book is published in November, 1983.

*On Being Reformed* has been translated into Japanese, Korean, and Chinese.

Judson, Gregory, Ann, Nathan, and John III.

Drinner party in Tokyo, July 2005, with friends and former students of Western Theological Seminary.

John has tea with Karl Barth after completing doctoral studies in Basel, Switzerland, June 1961. Karl Barth, John Hesselink, John Ter Louw (father-in-law), Pauline von Rätschelm (Barth’s assistant, and to her right her nephew).
Alumni/ae Day

1958

Front: Art DeHoogh, Lou Benes, Richard Huls, Charles Kamp, Tom Keizer
Back: Harris Verkai, Kermit Hogenboom, Gerald Osland, John DeJong, Gerry Heemstra, Gerald VanderVlede, Sam Hofman


1968

David Manis, Ralph Kickert (M.R.E.), Vern Sterk, John Verhoog, Jim Stralow


1983

Tom Kragt, Ron Kelley


* deceased

AlumLine

In cooperation with Journey at WTS, Donald J. Bruggink ’54 is leading a seminar to Turkey “Cradle of Christiani- ty” in June, and in October he will lead a seminar to Rome and Sicily. As general editor of the Historical Series of the RCA, he announces the 57th volume: Liturgy Among the Thorns.

On June 4 Paul E. Hostetter ’54 was given the Distinguished Alumnus Award by his high school, Manheim Township High School, Lancaster County, PA.

For the past ten years, Aaron Koskamp ’54 has been the Moderator of the Ewart Presbyterian Church south of Grinnell, IA. Three semi-retired pastors take turns leading the weekly worship services.

Don Nienhuys ’54 currently conducts a weekly home Bible study on the book of Revelation. In May he traveled to London, England and Lake Balaton in Hungary. He visited the Reformed Center in Debrecen. The trip was compliments of his daughter Nancy, an administrator at Andover Newton Seminary in Boston.

Holland America Line has asked Douglas van Gessel ’56 (Th.M.) and his wife, Joyce to continue as Protestant Chaplain volunteers in 2008-2009. Working with the priest, rabbi and Imam on board, Doug and Joyce counsel, conduct daily Bible studies, conduct Sunday worship services, and serve as escorts on land tours. They are in their 18th year of vol- unteer service for Holland America Cruis- es, having sailed around the world seven times.

At the age of 80, Charles H. Kamp ’58 retired from a part-time pastorate of the First Presbyterian Church, Antwerp, OH.

For the last six years Lawrence J. Doorn ’59 has served as Chairperson of the Board of Directors of Family Health Care in Baldwin, MI. He was recently awarded the 2008 Board Member of the Year by the Michigan Primary Care Asso- ciation.

Wendell Karsen ’63 has been quite active since retiring from his position as director of the WTS Master of Theology program in 2006. He led mission expo- sure tours to China (2006) and Tibet (2007). He participated in an international gathering on human rights in Taiwan at the invitation of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan (December 2007) and recently returned from a 5-week teaching/training mission to four islands in Indonesia (April-March 2008). There, among other engagements, he preached and lectured at Ev- angelical Christian Seminary (GKS) in Banjarmasim, South Kalimantan where WTS graduate Kinurung Maleh ’06 (Th.M.) serves as president. Rev. Maleh sends his greetings to the Semi- nary community.

After ten years at East Lawn Reformed in Muskegon, MI and 32 years at Hurley Reformed in Hurley, NY, Charles Slieck ’64 is retired and doing a lot of volunteer work. He also serves as a contract min- ister in churches in the Mid-Hudson Clas- sis. He and Esther live in Hurley, NY.

Norman J. Kansfield ’65 teaches in the Theological School of Drew University.

The Class of 1954 organized a special reunion in 2008.

Aaron K

He is on the editorial board of Out in Scripture (www.HRC.org/Scripture) and serves as Theologian in Residence in the Zion United Church of Christ, Strouds- burg, PA. He and his wife were involved in a serious car accident the end of April.

George Boerigter ’66 reports that his company, SoundOff Signal in Hudsonville, MI, was honored as Western Michigan World Trader of the Year in 2007, the smallest company ever to win the award. Also, SoundOff Signal has crossed the 100 employee mark.

Over 40 years of service in the Holland, MI area, Ralph Kickert ’68 has directed the Good Samaritan Center (1968-70), directed the Community Action House (1970-73) and has been a Chief Probation Officer for the 5th District Court (1970-2001).

George Brown, Jr. ’69 has been appoint- ed the Associate Editor, Historical Series of the Reformed Church in America.

James L. Moore ’72 is enjoying retire- ment and loves the Rockies, living in Col- orado Springs, CO. He preaches when...
On to Glory...

Raymond R. Van Heukelom '40  
b. Mahaska County, IA 7/13/14  
d. Holland, MI 4/18/08  
Central College '37; WTS '40  
Reformed Churches served:  
1940-1947 Corinth, Byron Center, MI  
1947-1953 Emmanuel, Chicago, IL  
1953-1961 First, Holland, MI  
1961-1979 First, Orange City, IA  
Also served as:  
1943-1946 Chaplain in U.S. Army  
1967-1968 Vice President, General Synod  
1969-1969 President, General Synod  

Clarence F. Greving '50  
b. Prairie View, KS 8/8/15  
d. Orange City, IA 2/29/08  
Central College '47; WTS '50  
Reformed Churches served:  
1950-1956 Newkirk, IA  
1956-1959 Otsego, MI  
1959-1965 Hollandale, MN  
1965-1980 Alton, IA  
1980-1985 First, Sioux Center, IA  

Collins D. Weeber '56  
b. Grand Rapids, MI 9/21/29  
d. Ft. Lauderdale, FL 2/16/08  
Hope College '53; WTS '56; CA Graduate School '76  
Reformed Churches served:  
1956-1963 Eastmont, Grand Rapids, MI  
1963-1968 Christ Community, Palm Springs, FL  
1968-1973 Family, Canoga Park, CA  
1973-1980 New Hope, Canoga Park, CA  
Dismissed to Presbyterian Church, 1980  
Coral Ridge Presbyterian, Ft. Lauderdale, FL  
Old Cutler Presbyterian, Miami, FL  
Trinity Presbyterian, Gahu, HI  
DMIn Dir., Knox Theol. Seminary, Ft. Lauderdale, FL  

Corstian Klein '58  
b. Armour, SD 1/28/26  
d. Bellingham, WA 4/28/08  
Seattle Pacific College '55; WTS '58  
Reformed Churches served:  
1955-1963 Maranatha, Wainfleet, Ontario, CAN  
1962-1964 First, Winnipeg, Manitoba, CAN  
1964-1969 Hope, Vancouver, British Columbia, CAN  
1969-1970 Prairie View, KS  

John A. Wurpts '67 (M.C.E.)  
b. Adrian, MI 10/1/42  
d. Ames, IA 3/1/08  
Northwestern College '64; WTS '67  
1967-1970 Speech & Drama teacher, Southern Normal School, Breverton, AL  
1970-1977 Teacher, Ogden, IA  

Joseph Bliss '83  
b. Columbus, OH 6/2/37  
d. Columbus, OH 3/15/08  
Reformed Bible College '90; WTS '83  
Reformed Churches served:  
1983-1985 Thousand Isles, Alexandria Bay, NY  
1985-1990 Closter, NJ  
Also served:  
Presbyterian Church, Altendale, MI  
Saint Luke's Lutheran Church, Grand Rapids, MI  

Necrologist: Mike VanDornik

Ken Neevel  
Vice President of Advancement and Communication

As you can see across the page, Western Seminary hosted class reunions for the 25, 40 and 50 year graduates on May 12, Alumni/ae Day.

The following day, Western’s Board of Trustees met and wrestled once again with the difficult task of setting tuition for the coming school year. This is always a tough conversation, because even as we continually look for ways to decrease the cost to each student, it has been necessary to increase tuition every year. The decision rests on a choice—decrease services or increase income.

I wondered what the tuition was for our reunion classes. I found out that in 1958 there was no tuition. In 1968 it was $300, and in 1983 it had risen to $1,280.

As it turned out, the Board reluctantly decided to increase tuition by 8.75% next year, bringing the total to $11,136. This is likely the largest percentage increase in recent history, and yet tuition will still only cover roughly one-third the cost of educating each student.

In 1958, the RCA covered 100% of the cost of operating its seminaries. Today that share is only 8%. Your financial gifts cover another third, and investments earnings offset the rest. As you can see, your support makes a significant difference, for without it, Western’s tuition would be truly prohibitive for many.

Not all of us are called to attend seminary, but we are all blessed with the opportunity to be partners with those who are. Each time you make a financial gift to Western Seminary, you are a partner in preparing leaders for the Church of Jesus Christ. Thank you for your partnership. Working together, wouldn’t it be wonderful to move tuition rates for our future pastors and leaders in the other direction?

Would you like to know more about how you can partner in the work of Western Seminaries? Please contact Ken Neevel at kenneevel@westernsem.edu or 800-392-8554.

Paul Van Maaren '05 and his wife, Courtney, welcomed their second daughter, Olivia Noel, on March 30, 2008.

Jeff Roessing '07 and his wife, Melissa, announce the arrival of their first child, Tepo Robert Roessing on May 7, 2008. The name Tepo is a shortened version of the South African word Tsepo, which means "hope," or "to have hope or faith.

Let classmates and colleagues know about the milestones in your life. Send your news items to "Alumline," Western Theological Seminary, 101 E. 13th St., Holland, MI 49423; fax 616-392-7171; or carlaw@westernsem.edu.

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On May 12 Western Theological Seminary granted degrees to its largest class ever at its 132nd commencement service held in the Dimnent Memorial Chapel on the campus of Hope College.

This class includes Western’s historic first graduating distance-learning students. These nine students from across the country have earned their Master of Divinity degree after five years of study including online learning and twice-yearly intensives held on campus in Holland, MI.

Dr. Mark Noll addressed the graduates on the subject, “Proclaiming Christ, Who Is Before All Things” based on the scripture, Colossians 1:9-20. Dr. Noll is the Francis A. McAnaney Professor of History at the University of Notre Dame and is widely considered a leading historian of the American church.

Scott Nyp, a distance-learning master of divinity graduate from Brantford, Ontario, Canada, and Kathryn Davelaar, a master of divinity graduate from Holland, addressed the audience on behalf of their class. Ekpenyong Akpanika from Calabar, Nigeria spoke on behalf of the master of theology graduates. Apollos Handan of Chori, Kaduna, Nigeria spoke to the audience regarding the experience of pursuing a doctor of ministry degree, which he received that night.

The liturgy for the event was written by graduates Miriam Ippel, Ekpenyong Akpanika, Larry Karow, and Richard Peterson.

Afterward guests greeted graduates on the lawn outside Mulder Chapel, and a reception was held for the graduates in Burggraaff Atrium.
In Memory of David & Susan Kingma
Richard and Joyce Kingma

In Honor of Rev. Dr. Dennis Voskuil
Cynthia Holder Rich and Mark Rich

In Memory of Frederic Doffin
Henry and Cornelia Poppen

In Memory of Marjorie Hager
George and Wila Brown

In Memory of Antonio Moncada
Jeannette Moncada

In Honor of David & Susan Kingma
Richard and Joyce Kingma

In Honor of Rev. Dr. Dennis Voskuil
Cynthia Holder Rich and Mark Rich

In Memory of Frederic Doffin
Henry and Cornelia Poppen

In Memory of Marjorie Hager
George and Wila Brown

In Memory of Antonio Moncada
Jeannette Moncada

In March Assistant Professor of Reformed Theology Todd Billings started a theology blog for an online journal of Theology and Culture known as The Other Journal. The blog, “Beyond Generic Christianity: Living Deeper into an Ancient Gospel,” is found at www.theotherjournal.com/blog.php?id=9. Dr. Billings was awarded a Wabash Center Summer Research Fellowship for a research and writing project, “Introducing Theological Interpretation: Scripture, Revelation, and Interpretation.” This project will assist with a book he is writing under contract with Eerdmans.

Associate Professor of Continuing Theological Education Cynthia Holder Rich will be a Resource Person to the Committee of the Presbyterian Church (USA) General Assembly that will be dealing with the recommendation to include the Belhar Confession in the PC(USA) Book of Confessions. The General Assembly meets in San Jose, CA from June 21-28. The Winter 2008 Reformed Review includes her article entitled, “Seeking a Contextual Cry of Faith: Race in the US and the Belhar Confession.”

George Hunsberger, Professor of Congregational Mission and Director of the Doctor of Ministry Program, will be a Resident Member of the Center of Theological Inquiry at Princeton Seminary during his upcoming sabbatical. He and his wife Katherine will be in Princeton from August 1 through February 28 of 2009. He will research and write on “The Missional Voice and Posture of Public Theologizing,” preparing a book-length treatment of that theme.

Associate Professor of Educational Leadership and Director of the Distance Learning M.Div. Program Merit MacLeod traveled to Moscow in April to be a key note speaker at the Euro-Asia Accrediting Association on distance learning at the Moscow Theological Seminary. Through this amazing opportunity communicated through an interpreter, Dr. MacLeod reports, “WTS is really getting on the map with our Distance Learning program!” Western now has a student from Korea in the program too.

During Western’s spring break in April, missiology and evangelism professors Vern and Carla Sterk traveled to Bluefields, Nicaragua, where they led a conference in Spanish for Miskito pastors, their wives, and midwives. Rev. Adrian Babb, a 2001 graduate of Western Theological Seminary, and his wife, Dr. Bernadette Kelly, were the hosts and translators at this event.

Associate Professor of Ethics and Theology David Stubbs co-taught a Hope College May Term class, “The Sacred and the Profane,” with Brad Richmond, the director of the choral program at Hope. They took 14 Hope College students to England to listen to the music of the cathedrals and the pubs and reflect on how the sacred and the profane have been misconstrued in modern times. Dr. Stubb’s article, “The Shape of Soteriology and the Pists Christou [Faith of Christ] Debate,” recently came out in the Scottish Journal of Theology.

New Testament Professor Robert Van Voorst published an article on Jesus in Jewish tradition in the new Encyclopedia of the Historical Jesus edited by Craig Evans. Several articles, including a large article on James, were published in the third volume of the New Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible. Dr. Van Voorst has been elected to the executive committee of the Church Herald Editorial Council. He recently taught adult Sunday School classes on the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints at Ferrysburg Community Church (CRC) and on the Acts of the Apostles at Third Reformed Church, Holland.