Together: Preparing Christian Educators for the Future

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Preparing Christian Educators for the Future

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Acknowledgements

Thoughts and dreams about this book have reared up over many years. Coalescing those thoughts and bringing those dreams to reality has taken the effort of many people. Putting together a book like this required the efforts of a number of individuals.

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Concordia University Texas

I give you all my prayerful thanks!

D.R.H.
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Foreword

Perhaps the most difficult challenge in preparing a book with many authors is choosing an appropriate title. Several possibilities came to mind. *Chaos* was certainly under consideration from the beginning. How does one get more than twenty authors to submit articles on time, in the same format, and with limited overlap in material? Answer: it is impossible. That reality led to the second choice: *Frustration*. As deadlines approached, the popular selection for a title might have been *Scramble*. Finally, *What Was I Thinking?*, seemed a natural pick.

The final title, *Together*, was inspired by a photograph taken by Tim Elliott – the photo that became the cover of this publication. It was taken at an annual retreat of Concordia students preparing for church work. In the photo you find many hands united *Together*. The first time I saw this picture, I was reminded of the children’s simple hand game: “Here is the church and here is the steeple, open the doors and here are all the people.” The ministry of the Director of Christian Education (DCE) in the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LC–MS) is very much like this photo. A person surrounded by God’s people, the church, supporting each other, and working *Together*.

Directors of Christian Education have served in the LC-MS for over fifty years. Today, approximately one thousand DCEs are called to this educational ministry of the Church. They are called as individuals but also called to serve *Together*.

*Together*, with congregational members, DCEs serve those who need prayer, love, and support.

*Together*, in DCE clusters and with the National Association of Directors of Christian Education, DCEs lend support to each other.
Together, with the congregation, DCEs carry out the Great Commission to make disciples.

Together, with pastors and fellow church professionals, the Gospel of Jesus Christ is proclaimed.

Together, with fellow Christians, DCEs make a difference in our world.

None of this would be possible without the most important Together, the togetherness we have with our loving Heavenly Father, made possible through the redemptive work of His Son, Jesus Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit. This is truly humbling, Almighty God working through sinful man. While our role is to merely be a tool in His hands, it is this Together that gives purpose and meaning to our lives.

Chapters on a variety of subjects have been compiled Together in this book. Some summarize research about DCEs and the DCE experience; others share years of personal experience as a DCE within a congregation. Some are objective; some are opinionated. One might agree with some conclusions and disagree with others, yet Together they have great value for both practicing Christian educators and those studying to become Christian educators. Your heart for ministry has led you to serve! Whether you are a student or already serving in a position bearing the title of DCE or Christian Educator or Children’s Minister or Family Minister or Youth Minister, whether you are serving in an LC–MS congregation or a congregation of another denomination or in a non-denominational setting, whether you are a lay person or a volunteer, my prayer is that you will find inspiration and guidance in Together.

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