

MARCH 2022 PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Connections, Collaboration, and Community

I've been writing of the process of creation and re-creation we all experience as Christian educators. We manage the old and the new and the yet to be. Sometimes we need to discard the old, live into the new, and prepare for the unknowns in the future. One of our challenges in faith formation is finding balance between all the elements of our ministries, programs and relationships. This balance can be a constant process of creation and re-creation as we discover what works best for our lives, our settings, and our ministries.

The connections we have can strengthen this balance. Connections can lead to collaboration when we are in partnership with others and don't have to rely on our gifts alone. Other gifts are invited into the partnership. It is wonderful to be a part of collaboration and experience the body of Christ working together. Connections and collaboration add up to community. Cultivating the practice of making connections leads us into collaboration, and these two create community. A new network of relationships may be brought into being.

I recently attended a workshop that asked this question:
What are one or two spirit-led opportunities that you see in your ministry setting?

I like this question for several reasons. It asks for one or two, not three or four or beyond that number. So often in Christian education we are managing a lot of programming all at once, and this is part of our calling as educators. One or two opportunities allows us to concentrate or focus on one or two invitations. Spirit-led invites us into the practice of discernment. Listening to the spirit in our settings requires a lot of attention, being present, and being open. This listening to the spirit evolves and grows over time, through our communities.

This listening is holy work. A wealth of connections, collaboration and community is available. Our work may be to discover our own receptivity and sharpen our ability to hear all the teachings around us. Listening is a spiritual practice because it plugs us into the work of the Holy Spirit in so many ways. Happy listening.

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