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## From the Editor

Sean Schat  
sschat@redeemer.ca

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## From the Editor

### Abstract

This Spring issue is a fascinating mix of manuscripts, all serendipitously related to ways Christian educators can lead, influence, and develop leadership capacity. The issue opens with Patrick Otto's call for Christian intellectualism. Belcher and Pebesma describe a study of technology teaching and learning for preservice teacher educators. Cavner and Bryant explore ways to plan integrated lessons for deep learning and life change. Farris and Purper share their experiences developing partnerships with public organizations in their local community. The issue concludes with two book reviews focusing on leadership in schools, one related to supporting students with special educational needs, the other on leadership for flourishing.

## From the Editor

Sean Schat, Redeemer University, [sschat@redeemer.ca](mailto:sschat@redeemer.ca)

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### Editorial Team

- Christina Belcher (Emeritus Professor, Redeemer University)
- Karen Dieleman (Redeemer University)
- Doug Needham (Redeemer University)
- Michelle Shockness (Eastern University)

Welcome to the Spring issue of the 2022 ICCTE Journal. I hope this letter finds you safe and well, and that your academic year has been a blessing for you and for your students and communities, despite the COVID fatigue we all undoubtedly feel.

Around this time last year, Adam Grant (2021), in an article in the *New York Times*, introduced a concept that aptly describes what many of us are experiencing in these challenging times: **languishing**. Grant observed that languishing “is the void between depression and flourishing – the absence of wellbeing. You don’t have the symptoms of mental illness, but you’re not the picture of mental health either. You’re not functioning at full capacity” (para. 7). More tellingly, he defines languishing as “a sense of stagnation and emptiness. It feels as if you’re muddling through your days, looking at your life through a foggy windshield” (para. 3). I have found this concept to be quite helpful, giving a name to something that is exerting a powerful influence on the wellbeing of the people around me.

More recently, in the *Christian Scholars Review* blog, Margaret Diddams (2022) penned a fantastic piece, building on Grant’s concept, challenging Christians *to be courageous in the pursuit of faithful flourishing*. I believe this is something we need to hear right now. Diddams (2022) writes,

I wonder if the interest in Grant’s article stems from a corporate sense of existential languishing. From our temporal perspective, we no longer

know who we are; how we situate ourselves in the past, present, and future has been shredded. The pandemic has created a break between the past and the present; personal control over the present has been constricted, and no one knows what “normal” will be in the future. We are anxious people in anxious times ... Courage, in this case, means actively reclaiming a volitional, authentic, and integrated sense of self rooted in Christ. (para. 6)

We live in unique, difficult, and complex times. A brutal war is being fought in the Ukraine, appropriately garnering significant media attention. Other, seemingly less “newsworthy” wars continue across the globe. Individuals and families throughout the world face significant safety, belonging, material, economic, and mental health challenges. Political tensions abound.

In my extended community, tensions between denominations and between Christians within the same denomination (even within Christian families) over the pandemic, pandemic protocols, and human rights and freedoms tear the fabric of unity and community. As a former Bible teacher, I lament the impact these tensions have had on Christian unity, and, perhaps as importantly, on the testimony of the Church to those who do not believe. While my own faith is foundational to all that I do, it seems ludicrous to expect others to willingly give up 10% of their income and 50% of their weekend in order to join a community that can’t even get along with each other, and that regularly makes seemingly questionable, even harm-causing decisions. Why would they want to commit to the body of Christ? Why would they want to meet Christ and hear His message and call? Indeed, because of my experience teaching

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Bible, I suspect that young Christians within our own communities are experiencing a profound spiritual disconnect as a result. What impact will this have on their perceptions of faith and community?

The student teacher candidates I work with are also experiencing a profound disconnect in their practicum placement classrooms. While there are many good things happening, and courageous teachers and educational leaders are having a marked impact on their students and communities, two years of pandemic-shaped education is definitely having a noticeable impact on students and learning. Classroom teachers and educational leaders need our prayers, encouragement, and support. Learning gaps are increasing. Social skills development has taken a hit. Morale and a spirit of hope are at risk.

Into this uncertain and challenging context, the ICCTE community (including this journal) is positioned to be both a beacon of hope and a source of encouragement and inspiration. As communities of research and learning, the work of ICCTE researchers, theorists, and scholars has the potential to make a positive difference. Indeed, we have the responsibility to use our privileged positions to be a blessing to the nations, working intentionally and faithfully within our unique contexts, missions, and spheres of influence.

As the editor of our journal, I look forward to hearing about your work of Kingdom service, and hope that the journal is positioned to be part of the process of sharing what you have done with others. In a similar vein, if you are aware of research or scholarship that needs to be shared with the extended Christian educational community, I invite you to encourage others to consider the ICCTE Journal as part of their dissemination process. Together we can contribute to faithful flourishing and wellbeing.

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teacher educators. Cavner and Bryant explore ways to plan integrated lessons for deep learning and life change. Farris and Purper share their experiences developing partnerships with public organizations in their local community. The issue concludes with two book reviews focusing on leadership in schools, one related to supporting students with special educational needs, the other on leadership for flourishing.

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- Grant, A. (2021, April 19). There's a name for that blah you're feeling: It's called languishing. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/19/well/mind/covid-mental-health-languishing.html>

### **2021-2022 ICCTE Webinar Series**

As noted in the previous issue, the ICCTE Journal partnered with the 2022 ICCTE Conference Planning Committee to host a webinar series. The presenters were selected either because their topic fit well with conference themes or because their ICCTE journal articles were our most downloaded. Links to the recorded presentations are provided below.

**1. How Far Are We Willing to Go?** (October 5, 2021) – Nyaradzo Mvududu (*Seattle Pacific University*) <https://youtu.be/w6qo1kvcwcw>

**2. Innovation through Gamification: Role Play to Reality** (November 11, 2021) – Maranda Turner (*George Fox University*) and Jen Kleiber (*Corban University*)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nNLB5-eTwHg>

**3. Abandonment or Affirmation: Reassessing the Language and Practice of Christian Education and Worldview in an Age of Bewilderment** (February 14, 2022) – Richard Edlin (CEO, *Edserve International*)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v0fXn7muzc>  
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Sean Schat, ICCTE Journal Editor

[sschat@redeemer.ca](mailto:sschat@redeemer.ca)