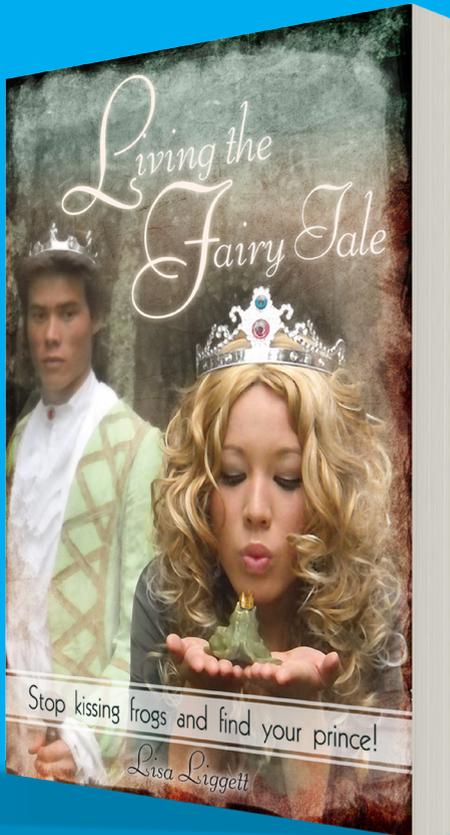


OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 2017

THE CHRISTIAN writer



BOOK REVIEW

Living the Fairy Tale

BY LISA LIGGETT

SEE INSIDE FOR

Competitions
New Members
& Latest News

Rightly explaining the word of truth – 2 Timothy 2:15

(New Revised Standard Version of the Bible)



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Membership, Subscriptions and Address Changes:

Jan Pendergrast (jan@roads-end.co.nz)

Annual Subscriptions—2 options:

1) Digital magazine: Full membership \$40 / Student membership \$20

2) Printed magazine: Full membership \$55 / Student membership \$35

Pay subs by direct or online banking to NZ Christian Writers, a/c 12 3040 0547346 00

Cheques can be sent via post to Jan Pendergrast, Seales Road, Oropi RD3, Tauranga

Book Review Requests: (members only)

Post a copy of your book to Julia Martin

286 Karapiro Road, RD4, Cambridge 3496

(Your book will be added as a donation to NZCW's library on completion of the review.)

The Christian Writer is published bimonthly by the New Zealand Christian Writers and distributed to all its members. Contributions on the theme of writing are always welcome. If you have some advice or encouragement for Christian writers, or an announcement of some event of interest to members, do send it to the editor for consideration by the 20th day of the month prior to the publication date. Submissions must be emailed as Microsoft Word or Open Office documents and are to be no more than 500 words long, except at the discretion of the editor.

The editor reserves the right to condense and / or edit any contributions for reason of space. Ideas and opinions will not be edited, but editing of a technical nature may occur to maintain the highest quality of writing possible.

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Contents

Page 2	Contact Details – Editor Membership Secretary Book Review Requests
Page 4	President’s Report – Justin St Vincent
Page 5	Minutes of the NZCW 34th Annual General Meeting
Page 6	NZCW President’s AGM Report 2017
Page 7	Token of Appreciation to Fred Swallow
Page 7	Congratulations to Elaine Millard – AWT Unpublished Manuscript Award
Page 8	Spring Seminar Report – Debbie McDermott
Page 10	Developing a Good Christian Drama – Request from John Clark
Page 10	Looking for Publishing Help?
Page 11	Welcome to New Members
Page 11	Writers Groups Details
Page 11	Professional Writing Services
Page 12	Writing Briefs: Matbie Babcock – Fred Swallow
Page 12	Help to Self-Publish Your Book in eBook and Paperback
Page 13	Get Creative: Whose Responsibility Is It? – Carol Duffy
Page 14	Ruth Corbett’s Fabulous Book Launch – Beth Walker
Page 15	Featured Book Review: Living the Fairy Tale – Lisa Liggett
Page 15	New Library Additions

CW Competitions

Page 16	Level One Results	Page 23	Level Three Results
Page 20	Level Two Results	Page 26	Under 20s – No Entries
Page 27	Competitions for December 2017		

The views and opinions of authors expressed in this magazine do not necessarily state or reflect those of the editor.

Website:

Our vibrant, user-friendly website is full of interesting information, such as details of seminars and copies of past magazines. It also gives each individual member an online presence. So please encourage other Christian Writers you know to join us via our website.

www.nzchristianwriters.org

President's Report

It's in our DNA to believe. Recently I had the privilege of speaking at the Promise Keepers Men's Event BELIEVE 2017 in Christchurch, Wellington, and Auckland. The BELIEVE theme appealed to the evangelical heartbeat of the events, plus it was an incredible experience to see so many men respond to the call. It's amazing moments like this that make me reflect on the majesty, power and sovereignty of God. I can sense this especially during moments of worship and He shows up mightily through the testimonies and lives transformed for good. As Luke 8:50 says, 'Do not be afraid; only BELIEVE.' Promise Keepers will be celebrating its 25th anniversary in New Zealand during 2018 when the theme will be LEGACY. Additional details are available on the Promise Keepers website: www.PromiseKeepers.nz.



In this edition of *The Christian Writer*, you'll read highlights from our Spring Seminar on September 2nd 2017, featuring keynote speakers Paul Smith and Maryanne Wardlaw. Their excellent presentations provided creative insights on book design, content editing, and social media. These were hosted at the new venue of Birkenhead Library's seminar space. You'll also read the important notes from our Annual General Meeting, including Jan's Financial Report and the President's Report. As noted in the report, our goal with NZ Christian Writers is to provide high-quality educational seminars, inspirational keynote speakers, and world-class retreats that add value to our members. Our prayer is that we encourage each member to continue on their writing and publishing journey.

A special thanks to Dianne Spain who led our Auckland group for several years and has decided to step down at this time. Since then two new groups have been established to help serve our member writers throughout the Greater Auckland area—an Auckland / Onehunga group hosted by Sara McGuire, and an Orewa/ Whangaparaoa / Hibiscus Coast group led by Rodney Hickman. Full details on our Local Groups, including Christchurch, Hawkes Bay, Kawerau, Northland, Tauranga, and Whakatane are available on the Contact page of our website: www.NZChristianWriters.org.

As always, we trust you enjoy reading our new magazine.

Blessings,
Justin St Vincent

New Zealand Christian Writers

34th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Held on Saturday 2nd September 2017 at Birkenhead Library, Auckland

Minutes: Janet Fleming to chair and Janet Pointon to take the minutes.

Apologies: Julie Belding, Fred Swallow.

Minutes: from AGM 2016 read by Janice Gillgren.

Approved by Justin St Vincent, seconded by Debbie McDermott.

Financial Report: read by Jan Pendergrast. (Copies available on request)

ASB Balance at 31/07/2017 \$1,574.24. Members at year's end: 166.

Approved by Janet Fleming, seconded by Janet Pointon.

President's Report: read by Justin St Vincent.

Move that the President's Report be received: Julia Martin, seconded by Janice Gillgren.

Committee Update: Justin St Vincent to thank Fred Swallow in Report. Certificate and gift for Fred, and thanks to Fred and Jan for use of their home for meetings.

Election of Committee: election / re-election of committee members.

President: Justin St Vincent

Nominated by Jan Pendergrast, seconded by Debbie McDermott.

Vice President: Janet Fleming

Nominated by Justin St Vincent, seconded by Debbie McDermott.

Treasurer: Jan Pendergrast

Nominated by Janet Fleming, seconded by Julia Martin.

Magazine Editor: Debbie McDermott

Nominated by Justin St Vincent, seconded by Janice Gillgren.

Librarian: Julia Martin

Nominated by Debbie McDermott, seconded by Jan Pendergrast.

South Island: Janette Busch

Nominated by Janet Fleming, seconded by Ruth Linton.

Committee to re-stand as above.

Close: AGM closed with prayer at 12:45pm.

NZCW President's AGM Report 2017

Welcome to the 34th Annual General Meeting of New Zealand Christian Writers. It is great to see several members present here today, plus many more new connections attracted to our community of wonderful writers. Our mission is: Connecting Christian Writers in New Zealand, with a vision to cultivate, encourage and inspire a vibrant community of Christian Writers throughout New Zealand. Our collective values are: Christian Faith, God's Word, Professionalism, Quality and Social Outreach.

Firstly, congratulations to all our competition winners this year. We trust you continue to grow in your writing skills and that the judges' comments plus their insights provide you with a good guide as you go from strength to strength in your writing. I'd also like to congratulate all our members who have successfully published books this year. Many of our members have pursued their passion for publishing, and I commend you on successfully turning your manuscript into a professionally published work. We currently have over 140 Book Features published on our website, which is incredible when you consider the number of members representing our collective.

NZ Christian Writers continues to grow with 160+ members nationwide. Our organisation is committed to achieving a collective goal of 200+ members by December 31st 2017. Currently our membership is two-thirds Printed Subscribers and one-third Digital Subscribers to our bimonthly magazine, *The Christian Writer*. We are combining good stewardship of our financial and time resources to provide an inspiring collective that attracts Christian writers throughout New Zealand. We aim to build a professional brand that is consistent across all our online and real-life activities, including our meetings, seminars, and retreats. Our intention is to have a strong brand with a consistent visual theme where our magazine and website reflects and reinforces our brand in the marketplace.

As many of our members will know, NZ Christian Writers has embraced a rebrand strategy over the last two years. This refreshed look has included a change in name to simply New Zealand Christian Writers, a change in logo, a brand new website featuring Writer Profiles and Book Feature from our members, a new magazine cover, new brand colours and fonts, clear branding on advertisements for our seminars and retreat, plus consistent branding of our website including downloadable forms for membership, and invitational cards to share with prospective members. This coordinated and collaborative approach continues to attract new members who are being introduced to our collective. Our goal is to provide high-quality educational seminars, inspirational keynote speakers, and world-class retreats that add value to our members. Our prayer is that we can encourage each member to continue on their writing and publishing journey.

One significant highlight for us was our Retreat during April 27th - 30th 2017, together with 28 of our writers, hosted at Flaxmill Retreat Centre near Whitianga. The vision was to create a world-class retreat experience inspired by the classic adage 'a rising tide lifts all boats', where collectively all improve together on their writing journeys. We were inspired by evangelist and author Kaylene Subritzky, professional editor and social media expert Lola Goulton, best-selling international author and multi-award-winning speaker Tom O'Neil, plus award-winning blogger and professional writer on gardening Sarah O'Neil. All speakers brought a unique message and we are already anticipating our Retreat 2019.

In other news, our committee are extremely appreciative of the long-standing service provided by previous committee member, Fred Swallow. He has chosen to step down from the committee to allow space for younger members to help guide the future direction of our expanding collective. Our current committee thank Fred for his passionate enthusiasm and significant contributions to the continued legacy of NZ Christian Writers. Thank you, Fred. We appreciate you.

We are also very grateful to our wonderful Local Group leaders, Dave Palmer in Christchurch, Jennie Chappell in Hawkes Bay, Ruth Jamieson in Kawerau, Janice Gillgren in Northland, Jan Pendergrast in Tauranga, and Ruth Corbett in Whakatane, and a special thanks to Dianne Spain who has faithfully led our Auckland group for the last several years and has decided to step down at this time. We will be prayerfully seeking a new leader for our Auckland Local Group.

On a personal note, my heartfelt thanks goes to our amazing Committee members, our Vice President Janet Fleming, our Treasurer and Membership Secretary Jan Pendergrast, our South Island representative Janette Busch, Magazine Editor Debbie McDermott, and Librarian Julia Martin. In addition, I'd also like to thank Dave Palmer for posting the printed copies of our magazine, *The Christian Writer*. A special note of thanks to George Bryant for his writer seminars throughout the country that continually contribute to our growing membership nationwide. Thank you, Local Group leaders, Committee members, and our wonderful writers for all you do.

With blessings and gratitude,

Justin St. Vincent
President
September 2nd 2017

Token of Appreciation to **Fred Swallow**

As Fred Swallow was unable to attend the AGM, Debbie McDermott (acting on behalf of the NZCW Committee) paid him a visit on Thursday 7th September and presented him with a framed certificate as well as a small token of appreciation for his many years of faithful and exemplary service to New Zealand Christian Writers.



Congratulations to **Ellaine Millard** for achieving **Fourth Place** in the Ashton Wylie Unpublished Manuscript Awards 2017



Spring Seminar Report

By Debbie McDermott

This year's Spring Seminar was held on 2nd September at Birkenhead Library. Justin St Vincent opened the meeting, after which Debbie McDermott shared a devotion on the responsibility we have as writers to sow the right seed into the lives of others.

The first keynote speaker of the day was Paul Smith, Managing Director and Lead Designer of Blue Sky Creative. After giving us some interesting insights into the history of how writing and the print and publishing industry has evolved over the centuries, Paul spoke on:

A Novel Look at Book Design

What is Involved in Book Design?

1. **Typography** (printed handwriting)

The first moveable-type was invented in the 1400s; Garamond (the first new printing typeface) in 1490; Italics in the 1500s; Modern Roman in 1780; Slab Serif in 1815; Goudy in 1920; Times New Roman in 1931; Helvetica in 1954; and Digi Grotesk (the first digital font) in 1964. Many other fonts have been developed since then. It is important to choose the font that works best with the design of your book's cover.



Paul Smith

2. **Colour**

Colour plays an important role in how it makes us feel. Red may cause us to feel passionate or aggressive; orange, playful and energetic; yellow, happy and friendly; green, stable and prosperous; blue, serene and trustworthy. Choose colour wisely.

3. **Imagery**

Photography is a popular method of illustrating a book cover. Covers should include modern graphics and typography. Using digital composite imagery software to assemble multiple images into one final image is also a valuable tool.

4. **The job of the book cover**

A book will almost invariably be judged by its cover. The cover must represent the story, say what you want it to say and form an initial relationship with the reader.

5. **Keep it simple**

It is vital to keep your cover as simple as possible. Ask yourself, 'What is the least amount I can show?' There is always more than one way to show the same thing.

6. **The final product**

Paul showed us case studies of the book covers he has developed. Each involved determining what the title should look like, then choosing fonts, colours, pictures, designs and text that highlighted the message the author wanted to convey.

The second keynote speaker was Maryanne Wardlaw, Communications Manager for the Tertiary Students Christian Fellowship (TSCF) and Editor of the quarterly TSCF *Canvas* magazine. Maryanne spoke on:

Content Editing for Print and Web

To be a good and relevant writer, it is important to keep abreast of current topics of interest, then add to the conversation. The principles for writing content for the web and print are similar:

1. Unclutter

Get rid of what is unnecessary. Write briefly. Less is usually more effective and memorable.

2. Tidy

- a. The passive voice should never be used.
- b. Never use a long word when a simpler one will do.
- c. Avoid clichés and run-on sentences which are hard to read.
- d. Do not put statements in negative form and don't use block capitals.
- e. Reserve the apostrophe for its proper use and omit it when it's not needed.
- f. Avoid commas that are not necessary.
- g. Kill all exclamation points unless you are quoting other people's exclamations.
- h. Never use repetitive redundancies.
- i. Read and write with your ear not your eye.
- j. Avoid ambiguity.
- k. Show, don't tell.
- l. Use language appropriate for the subject.

3. Accuracy

- a. Multiple sources.
- b. A quote is a quote.
- c. Check facts and assumptions
- d. Use proofreaders (plural).

4. Decorate

Use photos, images charts and graphics to enhance web and print content.



Maryanne Wardlaw

Social Media and your Audience

There are numerous social media platforms and tools through which to establish an online presence and market yourself, but the four most popular are:

1. **Facebook**—Stats: 2.01 billion per month. Use: To post stories, images and videos and to keep abreast of news, products, personalities, apps, games etc.
2. **Instagram**—Stats: 700 million per month. Use: platform for photos and captions.
3. **Tumblr**—Stats: 362.2 million blogs. Use: Image/video and long form text. Tumblr lets you effortlessly share and customise anything.
4. **Twitter**—Stats: 328 million per month. Use: Text (140 character limit).

What to look for on Social Media

1. Who posts and how often?
2. When are they active and what are they doing?
3. Where is the content going?
4. Which content gets the most engagement?

Twitter Hashtags

Hashtags (#) are mainly used to enable others to find topics and users of interest via relevant keywords. Too many or irrelevant hashtags will devalue your account.

To Website, or not to Website

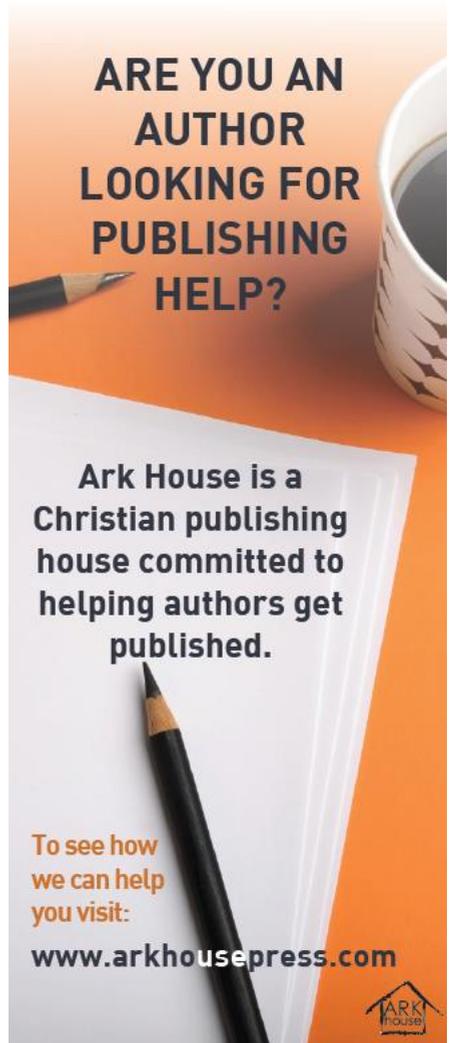
There are four important aspects to consider:

Purpose | Platform | Management |
Integration with Social Media.

Bulk Emails

MailChimp is the most effective online tool for managing bulk emailing lists. Not only does it provide an easy-to-use professional template to communicate information and useful data to multiple email recipients, it also enables cross-platform viewing.

All in all, this was an enjoyable seminar. Our thanks goes to our keynote speakers who provided us with valuable insights into how to publish our work professionally.



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Developing a Good Christian Drama

A request from NZCW member John Clark of Panmure, Auckland

I am interested in getting in touch with people who are keen to develop good Christian drama. I have written a number of plays which have been performed only on a small scale and would like to start networking with people who are interested in producing dramas so I can further develop my play writing.

You can contact me directly by email: jmclar@xtra.co.nz

We could start by sharing our experiences and looking at my current writing.

Welcome to NEW MEMBERS

Eddy Anthony
Hamilton

Vivianne Flintoff
Coromandel

Andrew Stirling
Hamilton

REMEMBER

to email your photo and mini bio to
Justin St Vincent
(editor@xtrememusic.org)
for uploading to our website

Need Professional Writing Services?

These New Zealand Christian Writer
members can help:

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If you would like to join or find out more
about the group in your area, please don't
hesitate to contact the group leader.

WRITING BRIEFS

Inspiring Christian writing of
today and yesteryear—

by Frederick Swallow



"I am Going to See my Father's World."

Maltbie Babcock, a tall, athletic muscular New York Presbyterian minister, Christian writer, musician, baseball champion and youth leader, presented messages with freshness and effect. He loved nature. When leaving for walks to view the Ontario hills he often said, "I am going to see my Father's world." Sadly, he never heard his words sung as a great hymn. They were found in his book of poems. He joined writers in heaven at only 42 in 1901.

This is my Father's world
And to my list'ning ears
All nature sings and round me rings
The music of the spheres.
This is my Father's world
I rest in me the thought
Of rocks and trees and skies and seas:
His hand the wonders wrought.

*Music: FL Sheppard. Text: Google,
Cyberhymnal*



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T: 09 4392 713 / M: 027 254 6778
E: ray@thewildside.net

Get Creative

Many thanks to those who sent in Get Creative submissions for consideration. Carol Duffy's was chosen because the challenge she presents on 'whose responsibility is it?' is both relevant and persuasive.

Whose Responsibility Is It?

By Carol Duffy

Adam blamed Eve; she pointed at the serpent; a generation later Cain asked, "Am I my brother's keeper?" God punished all of them. He held them each responsible for their own sin. (Genesis 3:8-19; 4:9-12; Ezekiel 18)

Today many people consider the government to be responsible for the solution to society's needs—the government should build houses, provide food for children, more money, more roads, more, more... Tell schools to teach more subjects—things that were once taught to children by their parents. But whose responsibility is it to meet these needs? Is it helpful to find someone to blame? Will that fix the problems?

Here's an example: for more than 16 years now I have been part of a volunteer team of professionals taking after-school literacy lessons for children struggling at school. Who's to blame for their struggles? Some would say the schools. Some say dysfunctional homes. Some say the government should do more for them. Does it matter? Is it my responsibility? No. Yes. As part of the body of Christ, I believe that if I see a need and have what is required to meet that need, then it is my responsibility. Who's to blame for the need is irrelevant to my calling. As James points out: 'Faith without deeds is dead.' (James 2:8-26)

Is there a problem you've been talking about? Have you been passing the buck? Can you make a difference? Will you take responsibility?

The next topic will be

How do our Christmas celebrations portray Jesus?

Maximum 250 words for prose and 4 verses (6 lines or less per verse) for poetry. Include the words 'Get Creative' with your submission, as well as set the next 'Get Creative' topic. You may include a picture with your piece if you wish.

Deadline: 10th November 2017

Email submissions for consideration to: sddp@xtra.co.nz

Ruth Corbett's Fabulous Book Launch

by Beth Walker

About 90 people attended Ruth Corbett's book launch at Whakatane Baptist Church on Sunday 6 August. Her autobiography, *I've Fallen in Love*, was published by DayStar Books.

George Bryant, a director of DayStar Books, called it, "This fabulous book," adding: "It's very spiritual." Ruth said she wrote it in response to God's calling on her life.

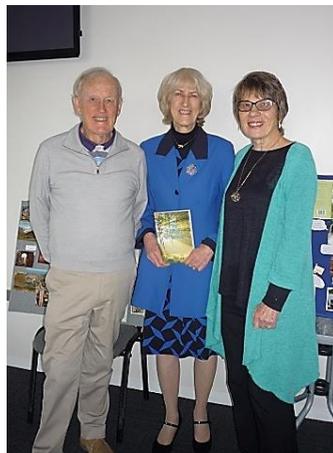
"Writing a book is rather like having a baby," she told us.

While expecting her son Daniel she needed a doctor, a midwife and a specialist because of her age. When writing her book, she was helped by George, Julie Belding (another DayStar director) and others. Personal support was necessary too, and Ruth's husband Chris and praying friends helped.

"When two people put their completed books in my hand, it motivated me greatly," Ruth said. She explained her three motivations for writing the book. She believed in the 'power of love' and wanted her readers to fall in love with God too.

Ruth also believed in the 'power of books'. "They have shaped and changed my life, especially the Bible." After reading *The Diary of Anne Frank*, she began her own diary.

The 'power of encouragement' was important to Ruth too. She hoped her readers would find fresh hope and courage.



DayStar publishers George Bryant and Julie Belding with Ruth Corbett



Ruth autographing her book

Julie and George spoke about DayStar Books, New Zealand's only not-for-profit publishing house. (They charge a third to a half of the fees of other publishers.) So far, they have produced about 20 books, with two more nearly ready.

Ruth joined Christian Writers in about 1993, and attended the West Auckland group before moving to the Bay of Plenty in 2001. Last autumn she began leading the Whakatane group.

She described the launch as "...a wonderful encouragement." The food, flowers and photos of Ruth's life were also fabulous.

Featured Book Review

New Library Additions



Living the Fairy Tale

By Lisa Liggett

Review by Julia Martin

The author uses the analogy of the Frog Prince and Princess fairy tale to illustrate her troubled relationship with a young man she was deeply in love with and hoping to marry.

For three years she persisted with the relationship in the hope that the frog would become a prince—but it was not to be.

Humiliated, heartbroken and socially withdrawn, Lisa eventually accepts the fact that the toxic relationship is over. She writes: 'With a shredded heart, but my faith intact, I began to unravel why Mr Right had turned out to be so wrong.'

Searching for a fool-proof way of avoiding a repeat experience, she discovers the concept of the 'Love Triangle', involving commitment, intimacy and passion—all necessary for true love. Determined to fill the gap in her life, Lisa pursues a friend-making exercise and outlines eight helpful strategies for developing friendships.

The book ends with a checklist drawn from her past experiences of dating and useful for anyone entering that world. Apart from a short, insightful extract written by her husband, the reader only gets Lisa's one-sided version of her relationships.

The book is well written. For girls looking for self-help guidance on intentional dating, this may be the book for them.

Copies are available from:
www.lisaliggett.co.nz

Let the Sunshine In

—shows how the power of praise and encouragement changes lives and creates positive, happier people who can live a fulfilled life.

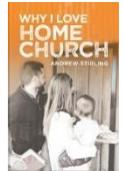
By Bob Wickham
www.praiseitforward.co



Why I Love Home Church

—A Biblical alternative to the established way of 'doing' church brings freedom from religious practices which make God's Word of no effect in the lives of believers.

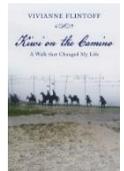
By Andrew Stirling
www.HomeChurch.nz



Kiwi on the Camino

—While on this 900km spiritual journey, the author's life is changed radically as she faces up to her fears and shortcomings.

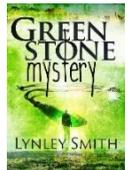
By Vivianne Flintoff
www.vivianeflintoffbooks.com



Green Stone Mystery

—A group of children transported back in time to ancient Israel discover through various serious adventures that GOD IS REAL!

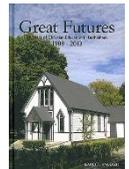
By Lynley Smith
www.lynlevsmith.com



Great Future

—25 years of Christian Education in Bethlehem 1988 to 2013. This is the modern-day true story of God at work in NZ's world of education.

By Jeanette Knudsen
www.beth.school.nz



I've Fallen in Love

—The personal story of how the author has experienced God's amazing love throughout her life. This book shines hope into issues many people grapple with.

Ruth Corbett
www.daystarbooks.org



Competition Results

Level One

Judge: Debbie McDermott

Requirement: Write a modern day fable with a strong Christian moral. 400 words.

General Comments

Congratulations to the three contestants who entered this competition. Your fables were very well-written which made awarding places difficult. My final decision was based on:

1. *Reader engagement: Was the fable interesting and fun to read?*
2. *How complex was the language used? Fables are traditionally written to teach children moral values. It is therefore important to avoid using complicated words children may not understand if your takeaway message is to have the desired impact.*
3. *Was the moral of the story clearly conveyed to the reader?*
4. *Had any creative techniques or literary devices (e.g. homonyms) been used to lift the story?*

First Place Equal



Yvonne
Mossom
of Whangarei

The Donkey and the Poodle

The Donkey was a faithful servant to the Man. She carried heavy baskets out of the fields when it was harvest time and she pulled the cart laden with produce to the market. She had a warm stable to sleep in and plenty of healthy food to eat but her work was very tiring and when it was market day she would rather stay at home and munch hay. She was exhausted.

She longed for a little cossetting. The occasional carrot would be very acceptable. A day off would be heaven. She was dissatisfied with her life. She was jealous too. The Man had a pet poodle.

“Poochi” (what a name) was a very spoilt little dog. He was allowed inside and slept on the Man’s bed. He could curl up in front of the fire when it was very cold. He was fed with delicious food and was given treats too. The donkey had even seen Poochi snuggled up on the Man’s lap. When the Man’s friends came to visit the lapdog was sure to show off his tricks. Chasing a ball. Jumping for a titbit, barking in time to the radio.

The Donkey was fed up. He compared his hard lot with the luxury and idleness of the stupid little poodle. One day after a gruelling journey from the village, in sleet and cold the Donkey suddenly flipped. He rushed into the house and tried to copy Poochi. He rubbed himself on the Man, who was astonished. He jumped in the air and tried to catch an imaginary ball. He tried to bark but it came out all wrong. An ee-aw with a woof. Not impressive. Then he frisked around the sitting room smashed into the coffee table and a treasured vase went spinning.

The maid came running when she heard the hullabaloo. She stood, open-mouthed, not fully grasping who the intruder was. The Man yelled. “Get that silly ass out of here.” She grabbed the Donkey by the ears and tugged. He dug in his hooves. He was really enjoying himself. Then Poochi leapt up and bit the Donkey. Then he swung on the Donkey’s tail. Such a disgrace.

The Donkey was led back to his stall, dejected and ashamed. His master, the Man was disgusted with the asinine behaviour. He did not talk to the Donkey for a couple of days.

Did the Donkey learn his lesson? Oh yes: Be satisfied with your situation and do not try to get something that is not right for you.

Judge’s Comments

Yvonne’s excellent fable and choice of title is written in a style similar to that used by Aesop, the famous Greek fabulist and storyteller. She immediately engages her reader with a good introduction and the personalities of her characters are plausible and easy to visualise. There is also a strong build up to the fable’s takeaway message, and the reader is left in no doubt about the moral of story because it is clearly stated as the conclusion.

As Yvonne consistently writes ‘Donkey’ with a capital letter throughout the story, it is to be assumed this is the name of the beast, just as Poochi is the name of the dog. Therefore, the word ‘the’ should be deleted when it comes before ‘Donkey’.

Yvonne’s sentence structure, grammar and punctuation are excellent and, apart from a few words (i.e. cossetting, dissatisfied, hullabaloo), the language she has used is also appropriate for a younger audience. Areas for improvement or correction are as follows:

- *In each instance throughout the piece, the word ‘man’ should be in lower case (i.e. no first capital letter) as this is not his name and he is not a principal character.*
- *Para 2, sentence 4—delete the unnecessary second ‘was’ so that the sentence reads: ‘He was fed with delicious food and given treats too.’*
- *Para 4, sentence 2—the comma should be placed after ‘cold’ not after ‘village’.*
- *Insert commas after ‘sitting room’ (para 4), ‘yelled’ (para 5), ‘Man’ (para 6).*

First Place Equal



Felicity
Logan
of Feilding

FOOD FEUD

“FREE FOOD. QUEUE HERE,” proclaimed a notice under the old oak tree as the animals awoke.

Mister Bull jumped his fence. “I’m first! Keep behind me!” Others carefully avoided his powerful head.

Horse flicked her tongue. “I’m second! I could eat like a horse!”

“I’m right after you,” said Sheep and head-butted the pig. Grunting, Pig fell in behind.

"I'm number five! That bull there is no gentleman!" House-Cow was on a bad moo-d.

Dog slunk in sixth. "I am Man's Best Friend, so Mister Farmer will give me the best."

Hens scurried about. "Mrs Farmer will give *us* the best," they claimed. Each one pecked others, trying to get the better place. Dog snapped at them and feathers flew. Other animals arrived jostling, growling and cackling!

Horse stamped his strong hoof. "Bull, if you're really in charge, keep that rabble quiet!" But Bull, rather than lose his place, just roared his bullying voice, and Horse whinnied until he was hoarse. No food yet!

Goat trotted up, passing the waddling ducks and geese. "By the time food arrives, only crumbs will be left!" they hissed.

"You go ahead, then," offered Goat. His beard made him feel wise. Used to getting messy leftovers, he tacked on the end. Actually he fancied the Mrs Farmer's hat ...

The queue lengthened, almost reaching the farmhouse. Suddenly its door opened and out came both farmer and wife with large baskets. The animals heading the queue were so busy protecting their places, they didn't see the fattest carrot and juiciest sausage go to Goat, nor wonderful seed buns thrown for the ducks, geese, cows and sheep. Delicious salad greens for the hens caused extra din!

Mister Bull, feet firmly planted, looked back horrified. His nostrils flared. "Hey! Hay! Wrong end!" The baskets were already near-empty.

"Last one!" said the farmer, giving Dog a sausage. Broken bits of bun went to the pig, sheep and cow.

Mrs Farmer offered Horse a small carrot. "Last one!" she said.

Mister Farmer threaded rope through the bull's nose ring. "Come on, back to your paddock! There's good grass there."

Mister Bull's tummy rumbled. Off he trudged, aware of cackles and quacks from those picking up crumbs from their unexpected feast. And when the wind went *Puff!* taking the straw hat off the woman's head, Goat quickly stamped on it and ate it for dessert.

Judge's Comments

Felicity met the requirements of this competition exceptionally well. Her fable is fast-moving, amusing and punchy, and I thoroughly enjoyed her creative use of homonyms. The snappy dialogue also brings the characters of the animals to life and makes them easy to visualise. The takeaway message is cleverly woven into the story, but I do feel its impact would have been stronger had Felicity concluded her fable with one final sentence clearly stating what the moral of the story is.

Felicity's standard of writing is excellent and the language she has used is simple and expressive for the most part. There are two words I recommend changing for the benefit of a young reader:

- *Queue—'line' or 'line up' means the same.*
- *Feud—is a word seldom used today so may not be understood by a child. Changing the title to 'Food Fight' would resonate with the reader as this is a game children enjoy playing.*

Other improvements and corrections required are:

- *The title should be in Title Case not BLOCK CAPITALS.*
- *Para 5—'on a bad moo-d' should be 'in a bad moo-d'.*
- *Para 7—sentence 2 would read better as, 'Each one pecked at the others...*
- *Para 10—sentence 3 is clumsy. I suggest rewriting it as 'he joined the end of the queue'.*

Third Place



Elaine
Millard
of Whakatane

The Forgivus Clan of Forgetit

Frankey is head Grizzly she-bear of the Forgivus clan of bears that forage the craggy-range of Oupsi. Oupsi is the most outlying and overlooked territory of Forgetit; homeland for seventy remarkable Grizzly bands.

Frankey shares a pokey den with her seven younger sisters. All-told they have forty-nine cubs, of various ages. Frankey feels there are more like four hundred and ninety of them. Their clamorous demands and bellyaching makes her rather cantankerous.

Hence, Frankey is well-known for her hasty fault-finding ways, irritating micro-management and inevitable insults. Furthermore, Frankey often tediously reiterates the governing she-bear codes.

It's not that Frankey's reproaches are ever mean or uncaring; quite the contrary. It's just that Frankey is always undeniably truthful. That's what makes her so unbearable.

Now it happens that on the first day of March every year all the Grizzly bears of Oupsi gather for a summer festival. It is the picnic of all picnics, and every bear is expected to attend. Unfortunately the Forgivus clan dwells the furthestmost distance from the fiesta. Fortunately, Frankey is determined to get all her family, siblings, nieces and nephews to the grand event and back, no matter what.

It takes days of intense work to prepare for an expedition. Therefore every morning Frankey organizes everyone. But by departure date the tension between sisters has become furious and the cubs are griping. Eventually they leave their precious cave, looking forward to the best eat al-fresco ever.

It was an excursion they would never forget.

First five cubs went astray. Frankey spent three days finding them. Heavy spring rains had caused huge mud slides. Frankey found another route. A forest fire had destroyed much of their journey's food supply. Frankey caught fresh fish for super. An unexpected dam and lake was the biggest surprise. Frankey bravely bear-backed the littlest across the wide waterway. Lastly, they found the festival had been cancelled due to an outbreak of Grizzly-bear fever. Unbelievable!

Frankey was finally muzzle-struck. The whole downcast clan turned around and lumbered home. For weeks everyone fought and wrangled, but Frankey couldn't care less. The cave became stinky. The food ran out. The cubs went feral.

Then one dreary evening, all Frankey's family crawled to her bedside.

"Frankey," they pleaded, "please forgive us our Oupsis". Frankey slowly lifted her weary head.

"We're the remarkable Forgivus of Forgetit, aren't we?"

At dawn Frankey was formidable again, and they loved it.

Judge's Comments

Ellaine's well-written fable is interesting and her main character easy to relate to. The title is also very clever and immediately hints at the takeaway message in the second to last line. However, I feel a concluding sentence clearly stating what the moral of the story is would have strengthened its impact on the reader.

Fables are traditionally written to teach children moral values. Although much of the content in Ellaine's fable will appeal to a younger audience, some of the words are too complicated for children to understand. While some of these words can easily be exchanged for a simpler word, in some places it would be better to simplify the sentence altogether. For example, the first sentence in paragraph 3 could be rewritten as: 'Hence, Frankey is well-known for her hasty, fault-finding, controlling ways and horrible insults.' (NB: In this case, I suggest leaving 'inevitable' out altogether as there are already too many adverbs in this sentence.)

Apart from this, only the following corrections need to be made:

- *Rewrite the numbers above ten as numerals, not words.*
- *Para 2, sentence 2—'All told' does not need a hyphen.*
- *Para 6—the correct New Zealand spelling of 'organizes' is 'organises'.*
- *Para 7, sentence 5—'super' should be spelled 'supper'.*

Level Two

Judge: Jan Pendergrast

Requirement: Research your family history and write about someone who inspires or interests you from a previous generation. 400 words maximum.

General Comments

Thank you to all four entrants to this competition. Unfortunately, two of the entries did not meet the requirements or standard of the competition, so were not placed.

Some points to remember:

1. *To make a long dash: immediately after the word type two dashes, then with no space type the next word and a space. Voila! You have a long dash.*
2. *Do watch those squiggly or double straight lines on your manuscript. They are telling you something—spelling, spacing, punctuation...*

3. Please take note of the submission guidelines regarding font size, paragraphing, alignment and spacing.

The women featured in all entries were amazing. We have so much to be grateful for in our families' heritages, especially those special women who endured incredible hardships during tough times in New Zealand's history.

First Place



Eion
Field
of Hamilton

Elsie: World War 1 Nurse

The nurses lay in their tent, woken by the “crump” of artillery fire. Pre-dawn shelling began as it had each morning for months. Australian nurse Elsie Steadman abhorred those daily barrages and their carnage. She'd seen first-hand the ghastly spectacle of bloodied and broken bodies – soldiers who, if they recovered from their wounds at the Somme, would never be free from the trauma of trench warfare.

Suddenly came the noise of a shell on target, a sound terrifyingly different when the projectile is coming right for you. Elsie and her friends lay petrified in their stretchers as in the last seconds the scream died out before the shell embedded itself right outside the tent – and failed to explode!

Elsie and her colleagues got up, dressed and went calmly about their duties as Australian Army Nursing Service members. For many weeks, they'd been caring for wounded men at the casualty clearing station near Cambrai in northern France. Almost every day brought new horrors from the front, a short distance forward.

Nurse Steadman, 35, arrived in France from Adelaide, early 1917. Never married, she had trained in hospitals in South Australia, but soon adjusted to the brutalities of the conflict environment. She was first posted to 12 General Hospital, Rouen, tending shell-shocked patients. Next she was assigned to look after German PoWs in a barbed-wire enclosure beside the hospital.

Suffering illness, Elsie took convalescent leave to Etretat on the French coast, then was posted to Cambrai in November 1917. Later she was moved to another General Hospital near Boulogne; her duties included changing dressings, managing the wards, and supervising the diets of patients. Elsie was promoted to Sister at the end of the Great War, continuing nursing in England and back in Australia from May 1919.

Auntie Elsie, as we knew her, was my mother's “maiden aunt”. Elsie sent beautiful linen post-cards from France, with loving messages for Mum who was only two. We also have a candle-holder she brought home, with the name Rouen still legible. My family remembers with great affection this godly unassuming lady whose courage at the front saved many lives. She said that the Lord's protection was over her when the shell proved to be a dud. Elsie Louise Steadman, born in Nottingham in 1881, passed away in 1962. She will never be forgotten for her brave service, now 100 years ago, and for her quiet devotion.

Judge's Comments

Eion's introduction to Auntie Elsie was interesting, informative and intense. I was hooked by the first paragraph and he held my attention throughout. The author's name needs to be included after the title and the word count at the end. Some suggestions to tweak the interest of your story:

- *Para 1. 'Abhorred' is an old word. Detest, hate, or loathe would be a better choice.*
- *Para 3. There is always a better word for 'get' and 'got'. Instead of 'got up' use 'rose'.*
- *Para 4. Comma after 'next'. I would prefer the full 'prisoners of war' be used here.*
- *Para 5. Later, she..., Boulogne. Her..., War. She continued...*
- *Para 6. 'maiden aunt' should have single quotation marks.*
- *Create a new paragraph at 'Elsie', and remove 'now'.*
- *Use a more expressive word for 'said'. 'Believed' would be a better choice. Saying 'that' shell rather than 'the' shell would be more effective, and brings us back to specifics. It wasn't just any shell. It also connects us to the beginning of your article.*

Second Place



Lynda
Otter
of Tamatea, Napier

A tribute to Hannah Louisa

My great-great-grandmother Hannah Louisa Ivey, was born in Jersey Island in 1849. Jersey Island is the largest of the Channel Islands situated in the English Channel. At the age of fifteen Hannah married William Chambers on 27 March 1864 at St Saviour's Parish Church.

Hannah and William eventually decided that they would like to immigrate to a land where they could have greater freedom and opportunity; a land where they would be considered equal with the gentry. With their four children they embarked on a journey to New Zealand arriving in Napier on 2 February 1874. I admire Hannah immensely. Not only did she undertake an arduous three and a half month journey by boat with four children, but she settled with her family in Hastings in very primitive conditions during unsettled times. However Hannah briskly made the best of her situation and immediately set about caring for others. Hannah struck up friendships with local Maori, helping them in times of sickness and delivering many of their children. She was known as the 'Little Missus'. During this time she had two more children of her own.

Following the death of her husband in 1880 as a result of an accident, Hannah moved her family to Napier and continued to practice her skills as a midwife. It is said that she had delivered 739 babies by the time she decided to retire. When Hannah was thirty-three years old, she married again and had another two children. Her second husband died of pneumonia in 1911. Hannah lived until 1931, dying at age eighty-two. She is buried at Napier Cemetery.

Hannah inspires me because of her courage and her ability to keep going in times of difficulty with a positive and determined outlook. Her lifestyle was one of service and despite outliving two husbands, she continued to serve others all her life. Although I have not been able to find mention of whether she was a Christian, I believe her actions and attitude demonstrate that she was.

Judge's Comments

Lynda also wrote an interesting article about her great-great grandmother. How some of these women survived continues to amaze me! Some suggestions:

Para 1. Comma after 'grandmother. Re-organise the third sentence: On 27 March 1864, at St Saviour's Parish Church, fifteen-year-old Hannah married...

Create a new paragraph at 'I admire' and another at 'However,' and use a comma here.

Para 3. Leave 'that' out of your second sentence. If a sentence makes sense without 'that' then keep it that way. Re-organise the last sentence to 'Hannah died in 1931, aged eighty-two.'

Para 4. Re-write the first sentence, '...keep going with a ... outlook in times...' A comma here: 'and, despite'.

Level Three

Judge: Julia Martin

Requirement: Choose any book of the Bible with a minimum of 10 chapters. Treat it as an individual book and write a book review for it, excluding any irrelevant details. 250-300 words

General Comments

The requirements for writing a book review have been dealt with many times in these competitions. This time however, we're dealing with a unique book—the Bible—believed to be the inspired word of God and regarded as complete, inerrant, all-sufficient, living and eternal. Competitors had to review one of the larger books from a library of 66, written by diverse authors at different periods of time and places, but with a central theme throughout. In their reviews they needed to deal with the following questions:

WHO has written the book?

WHERE was it set?

WHY was it written?

WHEN was it written?

WHAT is it about?

HOW do you feel about it?

The opening sentence of the review should capture the reader's attention and the final paragraph needs to conclude with your opinion and feelings about the book, including any recommendations.

I liked the way each of the writers in their reviews made their choice of an ancient book relevant to our lives and times today. Surprisingly, two out of the three entries reviewed the Old Testament book of Hosea and were difficult to separate for placings.

First Place



Lois
Farrow
of Christchurch

HOSEA – A Love Story

The book of Hosea brings a powerful story of betrayal, forgiveness and restoration.

God asked the prophet, Hosea, to marry a prostitute and repeatedly take her back in spite of repeated unfaithfulness. Hosea obeyed, and his personal life dramatically illustrated the message God asked him to bring to the nation of Israel.

Hosea's warnings came to the nation over a period of forty years before its fall in 722 BC. A succession of kings reigned during this time when time and time again the people turned away from the true God and turned to false gods.

Through Hosea and his contemporaries, Amos, Isaiah and Micah, God constantly warned the people of the dire consequences of their sin. He was not afraid to tell it as he saw it. *You have rejected knowledge; you have ignored the law of your God; you are unfaithful to the Lord.* The accusations came relentlessly, but always with the purpose of restoration.

God begs them to return and through his prophet sends his message of reconciliation: *I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings; I will heal their backsliding; I will love them freely, for my anger is turned away from them.*

God assured them of his unfailing love and told them how life could be for them. *I will be like the dew to Israel; he will blossom like a lily. He will send down his roots and be like an olive tree, he will flourish like the corn.*

I am grateful for the message of Hosea, that in spite of my sin and failure, God is always there, always ready to forgive, and he never stops loving me.

Judge's Comments

Lois has given her review a good title and spells out the themes of the book in her opening sentence. She answers all the questions required by a book review in a clear and interesting manner, without getting bogged down in detail. I liked her quotations from the book but would have found it helpful for them to be tabulated in footnotes for easy reference. The review is simple but well written and I like the final sentence which conveys Lois's reaction to the book and its relevance to her relationship with God today.

Punctuation and grammar are good, but avoid if possible the repetition of words in your sentences. Try to find another word.

Para 2: repeatedly and repeated.

Para 3: this time when time and time again...

Second Place



John
Lindsay
of Christchurch

Hosea

Here is a man whose personal life and prophetic message are intertwined. The pain and grief Hosea experiences during his marriage to Gomer, an unfaithful wife, reflect God's feelings about Israel's idolatry and spiritual prostitution.

The modern mind resists the idea of God telling Hosea who to marry and what to name his children; especially when we see Gomer rejecting her marriage vows and giving herself to other men.

But we must place Hosea's life in the context of the main story; God's love for Israel whom he had chosen, taken out of slavery in Egypt and settled in a productive land.

The prophet obeys despite the personal cost. He redeems his wayward wife from her lovers and although he says nothing about his own feelings, we may infer his distress from his descriptions of God's grief over a rebellious nation.

Israel is enjoying great prosperity when Hosea delivers God's warning of suffering ahead if they do not stop worshipping idols. Their harvests will fail, their idols will stand silent and they will be carried off into captivity.

Hosea calls them to repentance and even prepares a prayer of confession in which the people may acknowledge their disobedience. He says if they will humble themselves and repent, God will forgive them and pour out his blessing again.

The book ends with a challenge to the reader. "Who is wise? He will realise these things. Who is discerning? He will understand them. The ways of the LORD are right; the righteous walk in them, but the rebellious stumble in them."

Hosea affirms the great themes of the Bible. God loves us; we have gone our own way; those who confess their sins and call on God for forgiveness will be blessed.

Judge's Comments

John's review of the book of Hosea is well-written and covers most of the requirements necessary for a good review. It does lack mention of the precise time and setting of these events in Israel's history which I believe is relevant to the story. In some ways it's more of a review of Hosea's life rather than the book bearing his name.

John has chosen a suitable passage from the book as a final challenge to the reader, but it would have been helpful to have the scripture reference in a footnote at the end.

He ends his review with an excellent conclusion which wraps it up nicely. Well done!

Third Place



Judith
Powell
of Oxford

Isaiah

Isaiah is a long book found in the Old Testament of the Holy Bible. It contains sixty-six chapters of messages from God for Israel via the prophet Isaiah who received them as visions. It is attributed to Isaiah, and possibly one or more others. Isaiah had a prophetic ministry lasting for more than forty years of trying to turn his nation back to their God during the eighth century BCE.

The name Isaiah, or Yesha'yahu or Yeshaiah, itself means Yahweh is Salvation. This is also what his book is about. The main themes are God's judgement and salvation. Through the dreams God had given him Isaiah encouraged his people with God's plans for coming

restoration and a royal saviour, a messiah. Jerusalem would be the centre of worldwide rule. The last twenty-seven chapters contain the strongest message of hope: of the Messiah who would be their Saviour and King.

This collection of oracles, prophecies and reports could be dry reading for us today if it weren't for the many words that are already familiar to us. Jesus quoted from the book of Isaiah often and I especially love the verses he used that promised of a Child who was to come. One of these is in Isaiah chapter nine, verse six.

*For unto us a child is born,
Unto us a Son is given;
And the government will be upon His shoulder.
And His name will be called
Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

I suggest you read the book of Isaiah yourself. Begin with a modern translation, read a small portion at a time and see what gems you may find for yourself.

Bibliography

The Holy Bible New King James Version, 1988 (1979), Thomas Nelson, Inc.

Judge's Comments

Judith has chosen one of the longer books of the Bible to review and covers all the key questions necessary for a comprehensive review of the book.

While her opening sentence is basic, I like the way she later describes her attitude towards this age-old book and gives her personal recommendation to get other readers involved and enthused.

The first sentence in the second paragraph is complicated and unnecessary. Simply write; 'The name Isaiah means salvation and that is what the book is about.'

Writing numbers: For numbers greater than nine, use figures. Also scripture references are easier to read if you replace 'Isaiah chapter nine, verse six' with 'Isaiah 9:6'.

I enjoyed your review Judith, so keep up the good work.

Under 20s

NO ENTRIES RECEIVED

Notice to Competition Contestants

The 2018 competition reference sheet has been included with this magazine as a centrefold. This will enable you to begin preparing your entries well in advance so ensure you keep it handy for easy reference.

Competitions for December 2017

Due by November 10th

EMAIL ENTRY AS AN ATTACHMENT, COMPLETE WITH WORD COUNT AND YOUR NAME.

Font: Arial, 10 pt **Heading:** Bold, 18 pt **Line spacing:** Multiple 1.2

Spacing between Paragraphs: 6 pt **Paragraph Indentation:** None

Alignment: Justified. **Send a photo** of yourself for publishing purposes.

NB: If you are not sure which level you're on, email the editor at sddp@xtra.co.nz

Level One—for members 20 years old and over

Requirement: Research the background story of a traditional or modern Christmas carol and include your personal thoughts and reflections on this. 300 words.

Email entry to: Debbie McDermott at: sddp@xtra.co.nz



Debbie

Level Two—for members 20 years old and over

Requirement: Combining part of your testimony with the gospel message, write a Christian leaflet for giving to seekers that includes a call to consider the claims of Jesus Christ and receive him. To create the same eye-catching effect of a leaflet, change your page size to A5 and its orientation from portrait to landscape. Then typeset your text in 4 columns. Include a picture if you like. 500 words max.

Email entry to: Jeanette Knudsen at: knudsen@bopis.co.nz



Jeanette

Level Three—for members 20 years old and over

Requirement: Write a poem giving humorous and practical advice to a newly engaged couple. (Nothing too intimate of course.) This poem should have discernible rhythm and a clear rhyming pattern. 25 - 30 lines.

Email entry to: Julia Martin at: pemburyestate@slingshot.co.nz



Julia

Under 20s—for members 7-19 years old

Requirement: Write a set of steps or instructions on 'How to...'. Choose a real or imagined topic. 300 words.

Email entry to: Vicki Nogaj at: nogaj@vodafone.co.nz



Vicki



NZ CHRISTIAN

writers



LISA LIGGETT has a background in teaching, and currently lives on a dairy farm in Northland with her husband of thirteen years and their two boys. Lisa is passionate about helping others avoid unrequited love, and then

clearly know when someone is in love with you, after her own traumatic experience with being rejected.

She has self-published her first book *Living the Fairy Tale* to achieve this. After the book's publication Lisa was given feedback that enabled her to begin her second edition entitled *Stop Kissing Frogs!*, which will include the perspective of the rejecter.

She is also keen to help mothers in their parental role to feel supported and is currently working on a book entitled, *Motherhood Bliss?* All books can be viewed on her website.

www.lisaliggett.co.nz