

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 2020

THE CHRISTIAN writer

A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a silver ballpoint pen, writing on a lined notebook. The hand has light-colored nail polish. The background is a blurred green field. The text 'SEE INSIDE FOR' is overlaid on the right side of the image.

SEE INSIDE FOR

AGM 2020 President's Report

Photography Competition

Tauranga Retreat Report

Book Reviews:

Wangano

Free to Be Me

Life Is...

Do Not Feed the Kea

Into the Sunset

Interview with Neven MacEwan

Is Your Writing Active or Passive?

Competitions and more

A magazine of NZ Christian Writers



Mission: *Connecting Christian writers in New Zealand.*

Vision: *To cultivate, encourage and inspire a vibrant community of Christian writers throughout New Zealand.*

Values: *Christian faith, God's Word, professionalism, quality and social outreach.*

President: Justin St Vincent: president@nzchristianwriters.org

Editor: Kathryn Paul: editor@nzchristianwriters.org

Treasurer and Membership Secretary: Debbie Smith

For subscriptions, donations, address changes: treasurer@nzchristianwriters.org

Join Us! Annual Subscriptions—2 options:

- 1) Digital magazine: Full membership \$40 / Student membership (up to 25yrs) \$20
- 2) Printed magazine: Full membership \$55 / Student membership (up to 25yrs) \$35

Join us through our website: www.nzchristianwriters.org/join/

Credit/Debit card payment is available online or pay by bank deposit, phone or Internet banking to: NZ Christian Writers, a/c 12 3040 0547346 00, Reference: [Your name]

Book Review Requests: (current members only)

Mail a copy of your book to our Book Reviewer, Julia Martin

286 Karapiro Road, RD4, Cambridge 3496 or email: reviews@nzchristianwriters.org

The Christian Writer is our bimonthly magazine published by NZ Christian Writers and distributed to all members. Contributions from members are always welcome. If you have some advice, encouragement, or an announcement of an event of interest to members, do send it to the editor for consideration by the 10th of the month before the next publication date. Submissions should be emailed as a word document attachment and 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 a high standard of writing. Views and opinions expressed do not necessarily state or reflect those of the editor.

© Copyright 2020

This issue printed locally by

BookPrint.
Making Bookshop Quality Easy

Contact David at
hello@bookprint.co.nz
09 443 1775
www.bookprint.co.nz

The Christian Writer

Oct – Nov 2020

ISSN 2537-8708 (Online)

VOL 37. No 5

ISSN 1171-0098 (Print)

Contents

Page 2	Contact Details – Editor Membership Secretary Book Review Requests
Page 4	President's Report – Justin St Vincent
Page 5	2021 NZ Christian Writers Retreat Poster
Page 6	Editorial: Never Give Up – Kathryn Paul
Page 7	AGM 2020 President's Report – Justin St Vincent
Page 9	Important Notices
Page 9	Photography Competition
Page 10	Professional Writing Services – Free Advertising for Members
Page 12	NZCW AGM 2020 Minutes
Page 13	A Different Retreat – Jan Pendergrast
Page 14	Double Book Launch – Ruth Linton
Page 15	Writing Briefs: Setting the Believer's Course – Frederick Swallow
Page 15	It's Time to Get Fit – by Rod Hickman
Page 16	Book Review: <i>Wangano</i> by Dianne Ross – Julia Martin
Page 16	Book Review: <i>Free to Be Me</i> by Joan Bryant – Julia Martin
Page 17	Book Review: <i>Life Is...</i> by George Bryant – Julia Martin
Page 17	Book Review: <i>Do Not Feed the Kea</i> by Carol Duffy – Julia Martin
Page 18	Book Review: <i>Into the Sunset</i> by Clare Matraviers – Julia Martin
Page 18	Interview: The Second Half was Better – Rod Hickman
Page 19	Is Your Writing Active or Passive? – Janice Gillgren
Page 20	Local Writers Groups / Welcome to New and Returning Members
Page 21	Crossword – Eion Field
Page 34	Crossword Solution
Page 34	Writing Competitions Points Board

CW Competitions

Page 22	Level One Results	Page 30	Level Three Results
Page 27	Level Two Results	Page 35	Competitions for December 2020

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. We encourage all members to reach out to other Christian writers. Feel free to share our website link with them so they can join us. As a member you are the best advocate for growing our collective of NZ Christian Writers.

www.nzchristianwriters.org

President's Report



Together with this magazine you will find the supplementary Competition Topics Reference Sheet 2021. This shares topics, guidelines and criteria for our

upcoming competitions next year. This year we have celebrated positive and sustainable growth with many new members joining us. We encourage you to give our competitions a go as your entries are a brilliant way to improve your writing skills and they provide an opportunity to be awarded certificates and prizes. I also want to express a massive thank you to Debbie McDermott, our Competition Coordinator, who continues her excellent work coordinating these details for all our members. We are welcoming new judges, Carol Duffy and Lesley Edgeler, who will be handling Level 2 next year on behalf of Janice Gillgren. We thank Janice who has shown incredible diligence over several years of service in awarding and supporting Level 2 entrants.

In this edition of our magazine you will find my President's AGM Report. With 2020 being a disrupted year, we have felt the need for consistent leadership in guiding the way forward for NZ Christian Writers. All our board members have been re-elected in their current roles. Thank you to all our board members who are shining lights helping guide the future for NZ Christian Writers: Janet Fleming, Debbie Smith, Kathryn Paul, Julia Martin and Janette Busch. I personally appreciate all the valuable contributions you bring in your skills, talents and wisdom. Your input adds significant value to our community of writers.

Our community is thriving and we are encouraged by current members being advocates inviting others to become members. One of the ways we intentionally build community is through our annual retreats that enable members and their friends to be refreshed in a relaxing environment. These are designed to foster a stronger community together. This is why we focus on delivering high-quality, exceptional value, inspirational seminars at our world-class retreats. Perhaps at this stage you are still considering whether the retreat is for you. Just like our competitions, may I encourage you to get involved and give our retreat a go. Retreat 2021 will be at Flaxmill Retreat Centre, Whitianga, from April 29th – May 2nd 2021. We highly recommend you secure your place and book today. Visit: www.nzchristianwriters.org/events/

Blessings
Justin St Vincent

BOOK
TODAY!

NZ CHRISTIAN
writers

RETREAT

APRIL 29TH - MAY 2ND 2021

FLAXMILL RETREAT CENTRE · WHITIANGA



**STACI
MCLEAN**



**KAREN
MCMILLAN**



**EUGENE
MOREAU**



**PHIL
STRONG**

BOOK TODAY AT
www.nzchristianwriters.org/retreat-2021

Editorial: Never Give Up

by Kathryn Paul



Never give up. If you're struggling with any kind of difficulty, be it personal or of the literature kind, God's here for you. Sometimes we have moments of personal pain or discouragement. They are not permanent. You *can* get through and come out the other side. As Christians we have weapons the world doesn't understand. It's up to us to become familiar with, activate and use those weapons against the enemies called despair and despondency.

Regarding writing, you may feel as if you've tried hard to get published, or get a published book to sell, but can't seem to get a breakthrough. Or you're part way through a written work and it has stalled. Perhaps it's like you were riding a horse toward a jump and at the last moment the horse decided to stop. Whether or not you managed to keep your seat or were thrown over its head is irrelevant. It's time to recover, figure out what went wrong, rectify it and try again. With horses, you may be surprised to hear it's never the horse's fault and horses never tell lies. The rider always needs to assess their own actions and the environment. They must ask themselves how incomplete their preparations, training or riding methods were before attempting the jump.

With our writing, it can be tempting to blame our lack of advancement on things out of our control. Some may say there is a certain amount of 'luck' or 'fate' involved. But as Christians we don't need to depend on luck or fate. We have God's Word. Proverbs tells us being a diligent, hard worker makes a difference and that all our work or effort brings a profit. It might not be a monetary profit every time or at first, but there is some form of profit. It could be a lesson learned or an opportunity that opens another opportunity. When aiming to win souls, we might have received a better result than we know and may only become aware of it once we're in Heaven.

Someone might come up to you in Heaven and say, "You remember that little Gospel tract you wrote?" You say, "You mean the imperfect one I could have done better?" They reply, "Well, it was good enough to help get *me* here, so thank you." If you haven't heard the story of *The Man from George Street*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SkjMvPhLrn8>, it's worth a listen. If you have heard it before but need some encouragement, listen again. The focus is on the amazing faithfulness of the man, but what about the written tract? It too made an amazing impact on Kingdom growth. So, no matter what, never give up.

I love to hear from our members. If you'd like to write to me or submit a contribution please email: editor@nzchristianwriters.org

AGM 2020 President's Report

Kia ora, hello, and welcome to the 37th Annual General Meeting of NZ Christian Writers. Even though 2020 has been an unsettled year for many, our collective has experienced positive growth with many new members joining our nationwide collective of writers. Our membership now represents a diverse spectrum of writing disciplines, including authors, bloggers, editors, lyricists, poets, publishers, songwriters and storytellers throughout New Zealand. Our bimonthly magazines have expanded in vision and scope, now offering a new magazine designed and formatted for Young Christian Writers. Our competitions continue to be popular, providing a way for our members to develop their writing skills. Our vision is to cultivate a vibrant community of Christian writers by connecting them to other like-minded writers in New Zealand. We produce our magazines as an inspirational resource for beginner and experienced writers. Thank you, everyone, for your contribution toward enhancing this thriving community of Christian writers.



At the heart of our collective are the values that unite us. These are Christian faith, God's Word, professionalism and quality, and social outreach. Our Christian faith is believing Jesus Christ is Lord, the living Word, who became flesh through His miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit and His virgin birth. Jesus Christ is the head of the church. His Body includes all people who have been joined to Him through a saving faith. God's Word, the Bible, is the inspired, infallible, inerrant and authoritative written Word of God. We aspire to produce publications with a high professional standard. Quality is about raising the standard of Christian publications throughout New Zealand. When we write about our Christian faith this is our social outreach to New Zealanders and people all over the world.

Congratulations to all our members who have published books this year. I'm always impressed by the incredible output from our member writers and recognise that going from draft manuscript to published book is an amazing achievement for any writer. This writing journey always takes time, passion and perseverance. Well done to those that have achieved their writing goals this year, and let me also encourage those of you who still have a book in you, that perhaps 2021 is your year to make it a reality. I trust the Lord will continue to encourage you in your individual writing journeys, and that collectively we can inspire others to discover the amazing grace of our Christian faith through Jesus Christ alone.

NZ Christian Writers has achieved three significant milestones during 2020:

1. We successfully launched our new magazine, *Young Christian Writer*:

Young Christian Writer is designed to attract younger writers towards NZ Christian Writers' collective. Thanks to the vision of our magazine editor, Kathryn Paul, we were able to design and develop a magazine that reaches young writers where they are at. We freely distributed this new publication to many Christian schools throughout New Zealand and have started to see a boost in new Student Memberships. We realised that NZ Christian Writers has a wealth of experienced writers, and our desire is to see their wisdom and experience shared with younger beginner writers to encourage them in their writing journey.

2. We supported an inspiring Local Group Retreat, Wellington Written:

After meeting with Paul Devereux, Wellington group leader, and also Rob Lake, we put together a framework for a local group retreat for the lower North Island. The inaugural Wellington Written was hosted at Silverstream Retreat in Lower Hutt and included guest speakers Susan Holt, Anya McKee and Paul Devereux. Thirty people attended, including sixteen in person and fourteen online via Zoom. This was a well-run local event and it was so encouraging that the Wellington local group team are considering future events for their area.

3. We shared more Writer Profiles and Book Features than ever before:

In our June-July 2020 magazine, we outlined the requirements for a brief biography, together with a photo to make a Writer Profile for our website. We also explained how a book synopsis and cover artwork could be used to create an online book feature. This has resulted in a spike of interest with many members providing extra content to update their profile. We now have 138 Writer Profiles and 201 Book Features published on our website: www.nzchristianwriters.org.

As a board, we have realised the need for consistent leadership during times of uncertainty. This consistency has given us confidence to move forward with our board members all being re-elected in their current roles. In addition, we have been formalising responsibility and role documents for one existing and one new role to help serve NZ Christian Writers. We have an excellent Competition Coordinator in Debbie McDermott and are looking at a brand-new opportunity for a Local Group Coordinator. This voluntary role would have general oversight over our Local Groups, providing guidance, growing local groups and providing support where needed. If you feel God is tapping you on the shoulder to help serve in this capacity, please feel free to let me know.

Our collective of writers continues to express a desire for a supportive community that encourages us to develop our writing skills. We are stronger together, and at our retreats we experience how a thriving community can be a positive influence on culture. We are looking forward to such a shared experience at our Retreat 2021. We are highly excited at what God will do at this upcoming retreat. We encourage you to prayerfully consider whether 2021 will be your year to attend this significant time together.

Finally, a massive thank you to our brilliant board members who continue to be shining lights for NZ Christian Writers with their insight, passion and wisdom. I thank our Vice-President, Janet Fleming; our Treasurer and Membership Secretary, Debbie Smith; our Magazine Editor, Kathryn Paul; our Book Reviewer and Level 3 Competition Judge, Julia Martin; and South Island Representative, Janette Busch. Thank you for your incredible contributions.

My prayer is that NZ Christian Writers will help to equip and empower every writer to represent and advance the Kingdom of God in all areas of their world. Through the gift of writing, we can articulate our Christian faith in a way that is compelling and brings about community transformation.

With blessings and gratitude,

Justin St Vincent

President, NZ Christian Writers

September 12th 2020

Notices

NZCW Retreat 2021

Our Writers Retreat will be at Flaxmill Retreat Centre in Whitianga *Thursday 29th April to Sunday 2nd May 2021*. Please visit www.nzchristianwriters.org/retreat-2021/ to register. Attendees are encouraged to carpool. We anticipate having a great learning and social time together. See the poster on page five for our exciting list of guest speakers.

Book Reviews Criteria

Members are welcome to request a book review for any of their published books, whether recently released or not. The main criteria is the book has some Christian relevancy. For more information on how to have your book reviewed in *The Christian Writer* please refer to page two.

Photography Competition for *The Christian Writer* Cover

We want to feature your photography on our six covers of the 2021 magazines!

All photographs must be 300 dpi (Dots Per Inch).

Photographs should contain images that inspire people to write. You may enter as many photographs as you like. There will be six winning photos and each will be featured on one magazine cover during 2021.

Email your photo entries to Justin at president@nzchristianwriters.org.

Deadline 10th January 2021.



Professional Writing Services

Free advertising! Are you a member who can offer other members a professional service relating to writing or book publishing? If so, you are welcome to send in your advertisement – maximum 100 words, to editor@nzchristianwriters.org.

ANNA'S EDITING

I'm excited to offer my services to you as a proofreader and copy editor. Working with authors to help produce a professional finish and to make their writing shine is my passion.

I achieved my Diploma in Proofreading and Copy Editing (with Excellence) in 2016 and also successfully completed a Copy Editing for Fiction course. It has been a delight since to work on a variety of interesting projects.

Feel free to check me out at: facebook.com/Annas Editing.Co/ to learn more and to read author reviews.

Anna Cullen: 021 717903.

E: annas.editing.int@gmail.com

ASTUTE EDITING

Candice Hume

E: info@astuteediting.co.nz

A WORD ABOUT EDITING

I am a freelance editor having received a Diploma of Proofreading and Editing from NZIBS in 2012. I have edited a large range of documents including novels, biographies, magazine articles, websites, and university assignments.

In August 1968, while beginning teacher training, Jesus Christ changed my heart and the whole direction of my life. I am passionate about working with Christian writers, helping them polish their work until it shines.

I endeavour to read the writer's intentions, not just their words, helping them shape their writing into a more accurate, natural and pleasing form.

Graham Pedersen: 0274405851

E: gpetersen@hotmail.co.nz

AUDIOBOOK RECORDING

Make Your Words Come Alive

Former Rhema announcer Rob Holding is offering a special introductory price of \$150 per 10,000 words to turn your written book into audiobook format.

And, so that you can hear for yourself what the end product will sound like, he will provide you a sample of the first chapter for free. Audiobooks produced to ACX specifications. Contact:

Rob Holding: 027 4509421

E: robholdingnz@gmail.com

CAVIT ENTERPRISES

Proofreading and Copyediting Services

I offer assistance to enable your manuscript to be free of annoying mistakes, repetitions, wordiness, etc, so that it can be sent to a publisher as a 'clean' document.

Most genres considered.

Fees to fit your budget.

Brian Cavit Dip Edit

E: cavitent@gmail.com

PINPOINT PROOFREADING

Present your important written work in perfect English! Qualified, experienced teacher, English specialist, will proofread your article, book, academic or business document, web page, magazine, inter alia, returning it to you in concise and error-free English.

Competitive fee. Quick and efficient service.

Good references. I do not publish but I can point you towards help. For a quotation, contact:

Lissa Weight: 021 0851 6944

E: lydiaweight@gmail.com

CHRISTIAN EDITING

My name is Iola Goulton and I run Christian Editing Services.

I hold a Bachelor of Commerce Degree in marketing and have twenty years' experience in human resources, including writing and editing a company newsletter, developing a government website, contributing to a textbook, and writing and proofreading more client reports than I can count.

I specialise in editing Christian fiction and advising pre-published and self-published authors on the business side of writing, publishing and marketing. Find out more at <https://christianediting.co.nz/resources/> or <https://christianediting.co.nz/blog/> and sign up for a free two-week course on revising and self-editing your novel.

Iola Goulton

E: igoulton@christianediting.co.nz

DAYSTAR BOOKS

Christian Publishing Services

Do You Want Help With Your Manuscript?

- What to do with it. (Free assessment available.)
- How to get it published.
- Where to find an editor.
- Help with self-publishing.
- Tips on writing.
- Ideas for publicising your book.

The one-stop shop of the DayStar team of consultants, authors, editors, graphic artists...are keen to help you.

We specialise in non-fiction but will also look at other genres and make appropriate referrals.

Ask for our brochure and discussion about any aspect of your manuscript:

E: Info@daystarbooks.org Check our website www.daystarbooks.org

WILDSIDE PUBLISHING

Demystifying the self-publishing process

Writing a book is hard enough without all the annoying and persistent questions about the next stages of the process (and the costs) buzzing your brain! We get it! Wild Side Publishing can help. Here's all you need to understand the process and costs:

- Submitting your manuscript.
- Proofreading and editing.
- Cover design and text layout.
- Printing quotes for NZ stock.
- Worldwide listing for print-on-demand paperback and eBook.
- Distribution to NZ stores and libraries.
- MailChimp and Facebook targeted marketing.

Visit www.wildsidepublishing.com/get-published/#publish_or_print and download the free guide to self-publishing.

WRITING ANSWERS

I have 20 years of experience as a copy editor and proof reader. I work on non-fiction books/articles/memoirs and also academic editing/proof reading.

I work with authors to prepare their work for self-publishing. I make sure their documents are print ready and, for example, I tell them that they do need to use mirror margins on their documents and no, the printer won't do that for you.

I have qualifications in technical and professional communication, editing and proof reading, science and laboratory technology.

I am in my happy place when editing and thoroughly enjoy turning people's prose into award winning documents.

Janette Busch

E: WritingAnswers1@gmail.com
or Janette.Busch@gmail.com

NZ CHRISTIAN WRITERS | 37th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Held on September 12th 2020 at 83A Pupuke Road, Northcote,
Auckland

1pm – 1:30pm | Online Via Zoom Meeting ID: 242-621-066

Chairperson: Justin St Vincent chaired, Debbie Smith took the minutes

Apologies: Janet Fleming

Minutes: from AGM 2019 read by Justin St Vincent

Motioned by: Kathryn Paul, seconded by: Julia Martin

Financial Report: read by Debbie Smith

ASB Balance at 11/09/2020 \$5,975.39. 273 members at present.

Move that the Financial Report be received

Motioned by: Justin St Vincent, seconded by: Julia Martin

President's Report: read by Justin St Vincent

Move that the President's Report be received

Motioned by: Debbie Smith, seconded by: Chris Dixon

Board Update: No board updates as all Board Members to be re-elected.

Election of Board Members:

President: Justin St Vincent

Nominated by: Julia Martin, seconded by: Kathryn Paul

Vice President: Janet Fleming

Nominated by: Justin St Vincent, seconded by: Chris Dixon

Treasurer: Debbie Smith

Nominated by: Julia Martin, seconded by: Justin St Vincent

Magazine Editor: Kathryn Paul

Nominated by: Justin St Vincent, seconded by: Debbie Smith

Book Reviewer: Julia Martin

Nominated by: Debbie Smith, seconded by: Kathryn Paul

South Island Representative: Janette Busch

Nominated by: Kathryn Paul, seconded by: Julia Martin

Board members to stand as above.

Close: AGM with prayer by 1:30pm

A Different Retreat

by Jan Pendergrast

We, Tauranga Christian Writers, held our annual Winter Retreat at my home again this year.

2020's retreat was different. No goals, proof or evidence of performance was expected. It was one of those events where 'whatever' happened. And it did.

I returned, after months and months of neglect, to my OCR-ing of an old, 1636 (?) manuscript which I am reformatting in its original language, with the intention of publishing the finished manuscript.

Jeanette spent the weekend at Hans, my husband's, freshly tidied desk (it happens every year in Jeanette's honour ☺), engrossed in her current project. Watch this space.

Heather, whose husband Brian came to enjoy a return to some farm-time 'work-out' with Hans, brainstormed how she was going to approach her next writing venture.

Ruth 'relaxed to the max' while her dog Rocky and my Matty exercised each other to exhaustion.

Catherine lost herself in Biblical word studies, an activity inspired by her small group leader.

Carol prepared her message for Sunday's visit to Waikeria prison.

We were extremely well fed, physically on tasty contributions, and spiritually as usual.

My son and his three boys joined us on Saturday evening to stay for the next two days. So our house was full!

Some 'retreates' went for real, serious walks! On Saturday, unbeknown to Carol, Ruth's Rocky followed her for an hour into dog-off-limits kiwi territory, but 'God was on her case' because she met a dodgy character in the bush. No-one argues with Rocky! And Rocky can't read 'No Dog' signs.

Our one-hour worship on Sunday developed into an extended and precious time of spontaneous, heart-felt and Spirit-led prayer support, encouragement and singing.

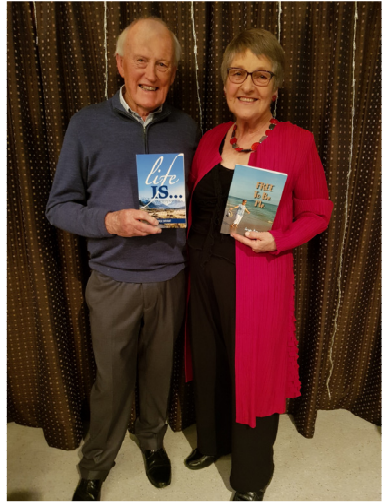
Because this 'event' is becoming a habit, we will meet again, same time, same place, in 2021.

Double Book Launch

by Ruth Linton

Over 80 people attended the launch of Joan Bryant's autobiography, *Free to Be Me*, and George Bryant's latest book (his 43rd book/booklet) *Life is...* including Tina Salisbury, Tauranga's Deputy Mayor. Despite needing to consider 'social distancing', it was a genial evening complete with finger foods served appropriately by Daniels-in-the-Park restaurant in Tauranga.

A highlight of the evening for many guests was a selection of songs performed by Harmony-a-Plenty Barbershop Chorus. These 12, mostly-senior members of society, sung unaccompanied many well-known and loved songs including Chatanooga Choo Choo, Wild Irish Rose and When I'm 84 (actually 64!)



Joan spoke first describing her long task to produce the finished book—"the only book I expect to publish" she said. At first intended only for the immediate family the audience expanded as she realised ones like her grandson and French granddaughter might otherwise not know of her Australian childhood, time teaching in Canada and the five schools where both she and George taught together including 15 years when George was the principal of the same school.

The Memoirs group at the local U3A stirred her to persevere with her writing and Joan gave special thanks to Daystar Books and husband, George, for the many hours given to bring the book to publishing.

"George has probably put as many hours into editing as I did in writing. It has been a long process and it was special to work beside him and see how tirelessly he works beside an author and I learned a lot," she said.

Joan also thanked her daughter Julia who produced the photo spread across both covers.

George was challenged to update his autobiography (George—the Secrets of an Ordinary Kiwi) which was published in 2006. Being one who thinks deeply about events and the meaning of life, and always wanting to challenge and help others, he chose instead to reflect on his personal experiences and the fascinating ups and downs of living here on earth. *Life is...* is the result of his research, meditation, hard work (including waking in the night with a 'brain wave') and many hours writing in his favourite coffee shop.



Will George write another book? We'll have to wait and see.

WRITING BRIEFS

Inspiring Christian Writing of
today and yesteryear-

Series by Frederick Swallow



Setting the Believers Course

As penned by John Newton
of *Amazing Grace*

All the time true believers walk by the same rule. The Word of God is their compass, Jesus is both their *polar star and sun of righteousness, their hearts and faces are all set Zionward.

The Lord is aware of the situation, talents and temper of each and partaker of trials he has appointed to them.

Some pass through the voyage of life smoothly but he who walketh upon the wings of the wind and measures the waters in the hollow of his hand will not suffer any to perish in storms, though for a season, many are ready to give up.

**Preeminent north celestial star in celestial navigation.*

It's Time to Get Fit

by Rodney Hickman

A candle in my mind's been lit
Today I endeavour to get real fit
I'll become a sports high impact man
I'll use all the various ways I can

So I rose up early and surfed the internet

Surely I'll lose some kilos there I bet
Then I ploughed for hours around the morning

Ploughed through emails, I found boring

At noon I dug up a real big post
On Facebook, you can view it most
I ran a marathon to the fridge each hour

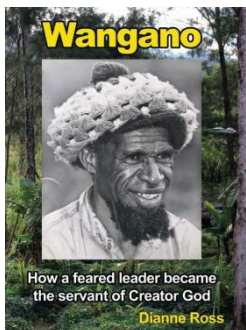
Do I feel my strength grow more power?

Then onto weights to work the arvo away

To get much fitter is what I pray
There I waited for the coffee to brew
And waited for toasted bagels too
Then waited for the mail to come
And so to the letter box I can run

Now I'm not so sure this is working right

But I'll not give up without a fight
Tomorrow I'll start a fresh new day
And hope this routine works I say



Wangano

By Dianne Ross

Review by Julia Martin

Published by Christian
Books Melanesia 2020

In the 1970s, the author served as a missionary nurse among the Yuna people in a remote part of Papua New Guinea. There she encountered a tribe living in primitive circumstances whose lives were controlled by the fear of evil spirits, witchcraft and payback killings. While working there, Dianne met Wangano. As a young man he showed natural leadership, but was known for his pride and cruelty.

When the New Zealand missionaries arrived in the 1960s, Wangano learned about the Great Creator Spirit and became a follower of Jesus Christ. Wangano's life was completely changed and he spent the rest of his life learning and teaching God's Word, modelling good behaviour, reaching out to other tribes with the gospel, and seeking to guide the next generation towards finding purpose and meaning for their lives by knowing God personally.

Dianne writes: 'As a leader, Wangano stood out among his people, for he was a man of excellence who enjoyed and wanted to share Christ. He was full of life and energy. He loved the Lord Jesus Christ deeply, and was undivided in his commitment to him and sharing his Good News.'

With the assistance of former co-workers, the author has written this biography to provide a non-western perspective of what it's like to follow Jesus Christ in a foreign culture.

This book will be an encouragement to those who are mission-minded, as it shows how God can use a pioneer work in the past to continue changing lives in the present, thus advancing his kingdom throughout the world.



Free to Be Me

By Joan Bryant

Review by Julia Martin

Published by DayStar
Books Ltd 2020

Though written mainly for the benefit of her family and friends, Joan's autobiography is an account of her life journey and is a testimony to all of God's faithfulness and goodness.

Born in New Zealand, but raised in Australia in a sheltered Christian family, Joan struggled with shyness and a lack of self-confidence in her youth. She graduated with a BA and a Diploma in Education and became a high school teacher in Australia and later in NZ where she met and married George.

With similar interests in faith, music, teaching and the love of books and movies, George helped Joan broaden her horizon with travel and his involvement in politics, education, writing, publishing, community service and church commitments.

With openness and honesty, Joan writes about her life: 'Free to be Me' is basically an account of how I discovered my gifts, overcame fears and grew in confidence. Life experience and many interests have given me confidence. Layers of self-protection, pride and perfectionism are being peeled back to reveal the real me.

I am learning to be more open and express my true feelings. My faith has given me strength and hope in the face of challenges. God is in control and I'm conscious of his hand on my life.'



Life Is...

An Ordinary Kiwi Reflects

By George Bryant

Review by Julia Martin

Published by DayStar Books Ltd 2020

Many of us are familiar with the author's style of writing and this latest book (number 43) is no exception. George has the rare gift of being able to discuss, inform, stimulate and challenge all kinds of readers in a relaxed manner without brow-beating or seeking to impose his own opinions and viewpoints. He tackles the big questions of life along with current topics and trends facing our world today.

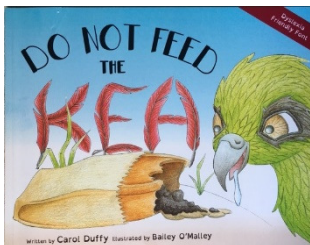
George researches thoroughly and draws on a wide range of experts and commentators, including his own observations and wisdom derived from a long life of experience in many fields of endeavour.

In his foreword he writes: 'In this book I've reflected on many aspects of life – the value and uniqueness of human beings, our enjoyment, our endeavours, deprivations and motivations. I've tried to understand our existence on Earth, the meaning of life and why we suffer.

I've reflected on the widening gap between rich and poor and a range of social concerns, such as political correctness, and the growing invasion of our privacy.

I've meditated on our increasing diversity, matters of life and death, health and wellbeing, spirituality, and have taken a glimpse into the future.'

I thoroughly recommend this book to be read and shared with people of all walks of life who the author describes as 'fellow life travellers'.



Do Not Feed the Kea

By Carol Duffy

Review by Julia Martin

Published by The Copy Press, Nelson 2020

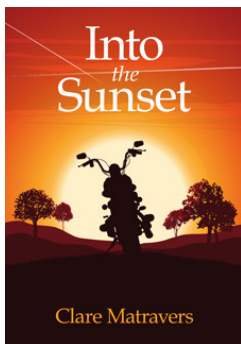
As a former primary school teacher, Carol understands the components required for a successful children's picture book. She has chosen a subject dear to her heart – conservation. In a note to me she writes: 'I am awed by God's amazing diverse complex creation and hope to inspire children to care for the wonderful creation we live in.'

The focus of this book is on the protection and conservation of our cheeky but highly intelligent Kea bird whose numbers are declining where they're found in the South Island due to interaction with humans. Carol uses rhythm, repetition and humour to convey her strong message – DO NOT FEED THE KEA!

Illustrated by the talented 15-year-old Bailey O'Malley, each picture contains a hidden item for the children to discover, along with the many dangerous things that put Kea and some of our other wild birds' lives at risk. This book is both entertaining and educational and one that all children and grownups should read.

Ways to Serve in NZCW

For members of two years or longer, you could pray about joining our Board. We are praying for a Local Group Coordinator to oversee, support and help set up local groups. We also need more Local Group Leaders, Proofreaders, Cartoonists and Magazine Contributors. Please pray about how you can serve the Lord in NZCW.



Into the Sunset

By Clare Matravets

Review by Julia Martin

Published by Castle
Publishing Services 2019

In Clare's third and final book in her Sapphire Series, she continues the fascinating saga of the Holden family with all its twists and turns, dramas and secrets.

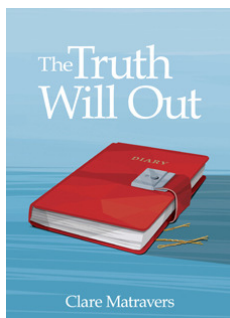
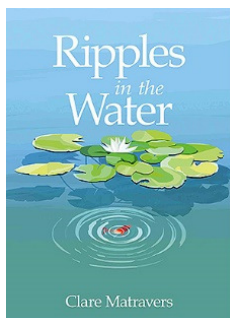
Set in New Zealand, the novel deals with themes of rejection, jealousy, temptation, distrust, danger, life changes and enduring love.

Although the series is not overtly Christian, the power of God's saving grace shines through and sustains and supports the main characters through difficult and challenging circumstances.

I thoroughly enjoyed all three books and recommend them to anyone looking for something satisfying to read and share with others who are seeking answers to the problems of life.

Other books in the series:

Ripples in the Water, The Truth Will Out.



The Second Half was Better

by Rod Hickman.

Interviewed 13/7/2020

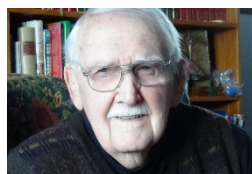
Neven MacEwan played rugby for the NZ All Blacks (55 matches) and founded a successful business but hit rock bottom after making some bad decisions. He was heading for jail, was suicidal and ended up an alcoholic.

So what happened that enabled him to dine with the Queen of England and the president of the United States, become elected as a city councillor, become chairman of the Rugby Museum, executive director of Prison Fellowship NZ and a prison chaplain.

He contributes this change to joining AA. This in turn led to a life-changing experience when he met Jesus Christ as his personal Saviour. If life is like a game of rugby then his second half was better than his first half. God used all his experiences in life to give light and life to his fellow man. He believes God has a plan for each and every person.

His autobiography *When the Crowd Stops Roaring*, released in 2019, is a 200 page story that is hard to put down. Now retired and living in Palmerston North, he states in his book, 'I learnt that God is personally interested in me, as He is with all his creations. I am nothing special, but he has a purpose and a plan for my life, providing I was prepared to slowly and effectively follow the life pattern of obedience. So I began to learn that faith is not religious practices and works, but developing a relationship of trust in and obedience to Jesus and this is a process. I cried out for help; he heard my cry and amazing things happened.'

Neven is not ashamed to tell that life has had some good and bad and ugly moments, but for him the second half was the best half.



Is Your Writing Active Or Passive – And Does It Matter?

by Janice Gillgren.

The most common criticism I received about my early writing efforts was 'passive writing'! As I became more experienced at my writing, my mentor wouldn't always tell me where the dreaded passive writing actually was, leaving me to figure it out for myself.

It took me a long time to become my own passive-writing sleuth, and it is something I still have to consciously look for. It is only after many years of writing that I finally feel that I'm making progress. I still use it deliberately sometimes though because it just sounds better, as in the sentence before this one.

So – what is passive writing and what's the matter with it? Is it always bad? I'm going to answer these questions in reverse order.

1. Is it always bad? No. A passive phrase can have more effect than an active one in the right context. For example, if you are writing fiction, you can show a defensive or timid character better by using passive language when quoting his or her speech.

Another possible reason for a passive being better is if your subject phrase is long. In this case, putting it at the end of the sentence may make it smoother. For example, 'The young child (object) is taught by parents, teachers and life experiences. ('parents, teachers and life experiences' constitute the subject phrase)'. If the passive voice just sounds better, then use it; but check first if an active alternative would be better.

2. What's the matter with it? Passive writing can be a timid and weak way to write. It is as if the subject (the person or thing that is the doer) is hiding behind the skirts of the object instead of getting right out and doing it openly. You may have to read all the way to the end of the sentence before you find out who (or what) actually did what it is you've been reading about up till then.

Passive writing, like passive speech, can seem like bending over backwards to be polite. While this may be common in some cultures, it's not great in writing.

3. What is it? In active writing, the subject does something or is something. It's direct and easy to tell who does what. For example, 'My friend planted a white rose.' The doer ('My friend', the subject) is first, then the action ('planted', a verb), and then the object of that action (a white rose). A passive version of this sentence reverses the object and subject: 'A white rose was planted by my friend.' Active writing is more direct and vivid, and usually shorter as well.

Active writing appeals to many of today's readers who prefer shorter sentences. This is particularly noticeable in junior fiction but can be seen increasingly in all writing. Readers today simply can't be bothered with the long, long sentences of yesteryear – some of which required some intensive study to figure out exactly who did what.

Working out in-depth sentence structure takes some study, but if you just want a quick guide – think about putting the doer at the start, followed by the verb (the action word), then the person or thing that the action is done to. When you are writing sentences, let your ear be your guide to some degree, but also experiment with different ways of arranging sentences if you are unsure. Passive writing doesn't have to be entirely rejected, but it should definitely be in the minority.

Writers Groups

AUCKLAND, ELLERSLIE

Sara McGuire
sara.mcguire81@gmail.com

CHRISTCHURCH

Dave Palmer
Mob: (027) 216 5743
davepalmer@xtra.co.nz

HAWKES BAY

Jennie Chappell
Tel: (06) 877 5874
heughandjenniec@outlook.com

NORTHLAND

Geraldine Crow
Mob: (027) 614 0445
fcraw@xtra.co.nz

PALMERSTON NORTH

Rodney Hickman
Mob: (022) 676 3640
rodneyhickmanpoet@gmail.com

TAURANGA

Ruth Linton
Mob: (021) 408 661
ruthlinton2015@gmail.com

WELLINGTON

Paul Devereux
Mob: (022) 053 3618
pauldevereux@xtra.co.nz

Our local group leaders are available to help connect you to a community of writers in your area. Contact these leaders to find out more about meeting dates, times and locations.

www.nzchristianwriters.org/groups/

WELCOME

New Members and Renewals:

Maree Baigent-Harris
Nelson

Susan Burge
Rotorua

Steven Clark
Auckland North

Ella Hamlin
Napier

Jenny Hook
Auckland North

Marjorie Kennedy
Rangiora

Regan Kim
Auckland West

Christine Nathan
Christchurch

Corrie Neleman
West Coast

Lynn Page
South Africa

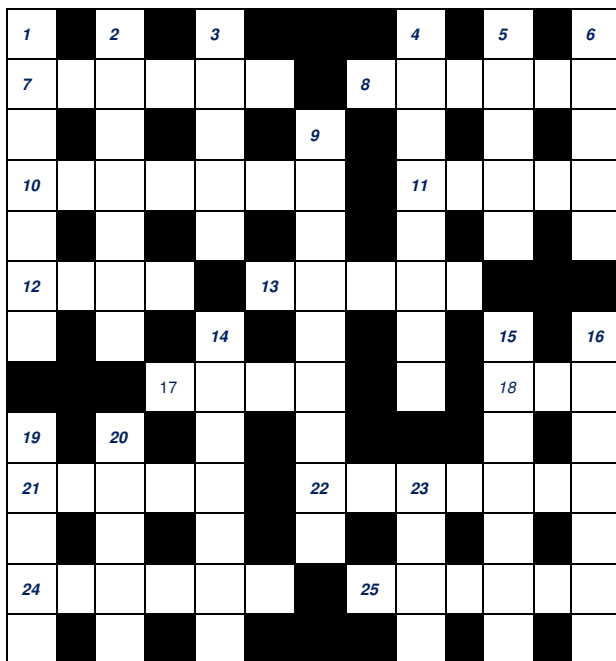
Nicolette Parsons
Christchurch

Valmai Redhead
Gore

Jung Won Yoon
Canterbury

All NZCW members are invited to share a Writer Profile and Book Feature(s) on our website. For details email NZCW president, Justin St Vincent:

president@nzchristianwriters.org



(Solution page 34)

Crossword by Eion Field

Clues Across:

7. Save from danger 8. Place of worship 10. Ordinary 11. Sharp projectile 12. Female relative 13. Speak 17. Topic 18. Blonde 22. Broadcasting media e.g. Rhema 23. Indigenous trees 24. Alter 25. 'Guardian' Saint

Clues Down:

1. System of rules in language 2. Donkey-like 3. Wall decoration 4. One of the skilled clippers mentioned in Isaiah 53 5. Separate 6. Harlequin 9. Section of the Bible, old or new 14. Crowds who followed Jesus 15. It was also called Golgotha 16. Gift 19. Rough road 20. Notions 21. 'Go off the rails'

BookPrint.

Making Bookshop Quality Easy

BookPrint is a Kiwi business helping transform manuscripts into books.

Many writers and Christian organisations are repeat customers.

You also can access their knowledge about binding options, cover design, page layout and paper choices.

Ask also about their local rapid in-house printing, and about their quality managed offshore volume printing options.

Contact David at
hello@bookprint.co.nz
09 443 1775
www.bookprint.co.nz

Competition Results

Level One

Judge: Debbie McDermott

Requirement: Write an essay highlighting four to five key points that validate the authenticity of the Bible. Give your essay a strong title, a good introduction, three to four paragraphs elaborating on your introduction and a strong conclusion tying all the key points together. 500 words.

General Comments

Congratulations to the eight members who entered this competition. Validating the authenticity of the Bible required personal conviction as well as research and each entrant made a good effort in this regard. The assignment was also a form of 'Christian apologetics' which is defined as proving and defending the truth of the Christian faith, scriptures and biblical doctrines using the Bible, evidence and logic. This meant the presentation of evidence supporting the authenticity of the Bible needed to be convincing enough to persuade a sceptical or non-believing reader. Most of the entrants did this successfully.

When writing an essay of this nature, it is important to remember you are writing to inform your reader. This means the information you are presenting to them should be in a logical sequence and flow well from one paragraph to the next. Apart from avoiding any confusion, this will help keep your reader engaged in what you are saying.

I was particularly pleased to see some of the entrants had added to their essays bibliographies or footnotes providing reference details of their research and any direct quotes they'd used. While not specifically asked for in this competition's requirements, it is always a good idea to include a bibliography when any form of research is involved, so that your reader can check your sources of information for accuracy if they wish. It is also vital to ensure you spell the names of people or books you're quoting from correctly, as such errors can bring you and your research into question.

While awarding First and Second Place was easier this time, selecting a Third Place winner was more difficult because each of the entries from the other six entrants (Corrine Sinclair, Jackie Davey, Danny Mwinga, Jill Clarke, Shirley Hall-White and Audrey Mulder) had merit. After much reading and rereading, I decided to award Third Place Equal to Corrine Sinclair and Jackie Davey because I felt their essays were more convincing in validating the authenticity of the Bible than the other four.

A final note to entrants: please carefully proofread and correct any grammar, punctuation and spelling mistakes in your entry before submitting it to me for judging. The loss of just one mark due to a mistake can make all the difference to whether you are awarded a place. Also take care to ensure your Word programme is set to New Zealand English, not American English when doing spell checks.

First Place



Christine
Platt
of Red Beach,
Auckland

The Bible: Fact or fairy tale?

The authenticity of the Bible has been relentlessly attacked throughout the centuries. Despite that, it remains today as the most widely published book of all time. Millions of people love and treasure it. Others have died to protect it and to affirm its truth. The main points of contention can be addressed by looking at four aspects: the manuscripts, archaeological discoveries, fulfilment of prophecies and the personal experience of changed lives.

The manuscripts

The documents which make up the Bible were written by 40 men, in three languages, over 1600 years on three different continents. The opportunity for error and incongruence is vast. However, remarkably there are common threads which run through the entire text. The reality that any manuscripts exist at all is a miracle because of all the persecution endured by the Jewish people where their property and lives were destroyed. Yet in 1947 the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered in the Judean desert. These scrolls include many fragments including the whole text of Isaiah. Scholars dated these from 408 BC to 318 AD. This discovery enabled comparison with documents already found and they confirmed an exceptionally high level of accuracy. No other document of the ancient time is as well documented as the Bible.¹

Archaeological discoveries

Sceptics have ridiculed the Bible stories, such as the walls of Jericho falling flat before Joshua's army. Recent excavations prove the walls did indeed fall flat. Others have claimed there was no census ordered by Rome around the time of Jesus' birth, but this also has now been proved to be accurate. The land of Israel is a treasure trove for archaeologists and each new discovery adds to the assurance that these biblical events did happen.

Fulfilment of prophecies

The Old Testament contains many prophecies relating to Jesus, most of which he could not influence in any way. He was born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2/Luke 2:4-7). He was crucified with criminals (Isaiah.53:12/Matthew 27:38). The possibility of any one person fulfilling all these prophecies is astronomically remote. These also provide a direct link between the Old and New Testaments.

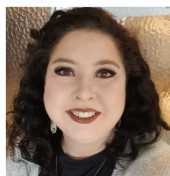
Personal experience and changed lives

Lee Stroebel, an investigative journalist and atheist decided to embark on a study to disprove the resurrection of Jesus once and for all. To his astonishment his research led him to faith in Jesus. All the evidence pointed to the story being true. He is one of billions whose lives have been irrevocably changed by the central figures of the Bible: God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

In conclusion, while there is still more to learn and discover about this unique book we must acknowledge that it has so far stood up solidly against the most vociferous criticism. More archaeological discoveries are being made, scholars continue their rigorous examination of the texts and ordinary men and women are discovering that this book changes their lives and destinies.

¹Compare Aristotle's writings with the New Testament – dates and numbers of copies.

Second Place



Taryn
Dryfhout
of Papakura

The Bible: Fact or Fiction?

Christians believe that the Bible is God's word—inspired and authoritative. The following will outline four key points that will validate the authenticity of the Bible and demonstrate that the Bible is a reliable, accurate record which has been transmitted down through history and shaped into a coherent scripture that reveals God.

Firstly, manuscript evidence provides important insights into the significance, and veracity of scripture. Compared to other ancient literature, the amount of Biblical manuscripts in existence is extraordinary and far exceeds that of classics such as Plato, Socrates, or Aristotle. When it comes to the New Testament, more than 20,000 manuscripts are in existence, making it the most reliable document in antiquity. The second most available text from antiquity is Homer's Iliad, of which just over 600 copies exist. The sheer scope of the manuscript evidence reinforces the fact that the Bible has stood the test of time.

Secondly, archaeological discoveries have confirmed the historical and cultural accuracy of the Biblical records. Over 25,000 relevant archaeological sites have now been excavated which have served as a testimony to the legitimacy of the Biblical record. The Hittites were thought to be nothing more than legend until their royal archives were unearthed in Turkey in 1906. Solomon's tremendous wealth, as described in 1 Kings, was also thought to be exaggerated for literary reasons, but recovered records show that wealth in antiquity peaked around the time of Solomon. Discoveries of this nature continue to demonstrate the credibility of the Bible.

Thirdly, the eyewitness accounts lend to the authenticity of the four different, but corroborating, narratives of Jesus. Some of these eyewitnesses were persecuted, or executed, for their commitment to the Christian message, prompting the question: would a person die to protect texts that were not true? It is also worth noting that the New Testament circulated while people who were alive at the time of Jesus' ministry, were still living. If the Bible was fiction, people would have refuted the book and corrected the story. However, nobody in the generation in which the New Testament circulated did, indicating that the Bible was likely truthful.

Lastly, Jesus is evidence of the Bible's validity. The four gospels all present an accurate, coherent record of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. In addition, Jesus fulfilled more than 300 prophecies in the Old Testament, written hundreds of years before His birth. C.S. Lewis argued that Jesus could only be one of three things: "Lunatic, Liar, or Lord". It is clear that he was not deluded, and unlikely that anyone would carry a lie all the way to their own execution. The only plausible theory is that Jesus was who he said he was, and thus, fulfilled and validated the Old Testament, as well as the four gospels which proclaim his existence and authority.

Having briefly explored these four key pieces of evidence, it is clear that the strong manuscript and archaeological evidence, eyewitness accounts, and reality of Jesus all point to an authentic, legitimate Biblical record that is textually and factually reliable.

Third Place Equal



Jackie
Davey
of Greymouth

The Authenticity of the Bible

The Bible is one story, with texts written by forty authors, over a period of sixteen hundred years. Yet, as Henrietta C. Mears writes in her book *"What the Bible is all About"*, "you will find there is a unity of thought which indicates that One Mind inspired the writing of the whole series of books; that it bears on its face the stamp of its Author" (p. 13). The "stamp" of this Author is why the Bible can be accepted as authentic. There are four other points that attest to the authenticity of the Bible. The Old and the New Testament are filled with events that are the fulfillment of prophecy, written hundreds of years before these events took place. There is corroboration by historical writers, who recorded events that took place and were written about in the Bible. Archeological evidence also supports the authenticity of the Bible, corroborating many historical details. There are Christians who will attest to the authenticity of the Bible that has changed their lives.

There are many examples of the fulfillment of prophecy in the Bible. In Acts Chapter 2 Peter preaches to a crowd giving them Old Testament scriptures to confirm that the events they were witnessing, were foretold hundreds of years before they occurred. In the life and death of Jesus recorded in the New Testament we see that He fulfilled forty-eight prophecies concerning the Messiah prophesied about in the Old Testament. In his book *"The Case for Christ"* Lee Strobel records the statistical analysis done by mathematician Peter W Stoner. Stoner computed that the probability of fulfilling the forty-eight prophecies was one chance in a trillion (x12) (p. 171). The fact that the recorded life of Jesus in the New Testament fulfilled these prophecies from the Old Testament is evidence that attests to the authenticity of the Bible.

The writings of historians such as Josephus and Tacitus attest to the authenticity of the Bible. Both writers provide very important references to Jesus (Strobel, 2016, p. 112). In his interview with renowned scholar Edwin M Yamauchi PhD, Strobel quotes Yamauchi as saying “Josephus corroborates important information about Jesus (p. 117) and “Tacitus recorded what is probably the most important reference to Jesus outside the New Testament” (p. 119). These historical writers provide corroborating evidence for the authenticity of the Bible.

Archeology provides corroborating evidence of the authenticity of the Bible. Strobel (2016) quotes John McRay PhD, “the credibility of any ancient document is enhanced when you excavate and find that the author was accurate in talking about a particular place or event” (p. 141). For example, for the gospel of Luke: “Archeological discoveries are showing over and over again that Luke is accurate in what he has to say” (p. 142).

The Bible is one story—the story of the Creator and the created, from the beginning of time until the end. The fulfilment of prophecy, the corroboration of historical writings and archeological findings, and Christians across time, cultures and countries, attest to its authenticity.

References

Mears, H.C. (1980). What the Bible is all About. Ventura, California, Regal Books

Strobel, L. (2016). The Case for Christ. Grand Rapids, California, Zondervan

Third Place Equal



Corrine
Sinclair
of Silverdale,
Auckland

The Word that Speaks – Tried Tested and True

The word Bible simply means ‘**The Book**’ It is a library of 66 individual Books written by over 40 different authors through 2000 years. It is not only the greatest and most widely read book ever written, it stands alone in a class of its own throughout history as the only book that begins with the creation of all things by an eternal omnipotent personal God. It is unique in that its central personage is that of the Lord Jesus Christ. A feature of Biblical Christianity is that it stands on strong evidences based on proven facts. There are hundreds of prophecies recorded in scripture which have been proven and fulfilled, sometimes hundreds of years later. Archaeological and historic research confirms many biblical references not previously recognised by science. The writers of the Bible maintain time and again that their writings are inspired by God.

No other book has had such a tremendous impact on the history of the world. The uniqueness of salvation by grace alone, clearly stamps the Christian gospel as divine by origin. This statement alone has provoked antagonism in both ancient and modern times. Kings and priests desperately tried to destroy it. Untold copies have been burned and mutilated. Hosts of its advocates have been persecuted and killed.

Question: How did the Bible come together as one book?

After the fall of Jerusalem in BC 586, the tribe of Judah was taken captive by the Babylonians. Because the Temple was destroyed, the Laws of God began to assume more importance among the Jews. About one thousand manuscripts were in existence, written in Masoretic, a Jewish text. Many of these were hidden in capsules and buried in caves to protect them from enemies. Some of these writings were discovered by the Greeks, who recognising their spiritual importance, gathered together some seventy scribes in 280 BC. Known as the Septuagint these scriptures were translated into Koine Greek. This common language was almost forgotten until discovered by archaeologists in modern times. Used by the dispersed Jews these scriptures would most certainly be the scrolls used by Jesus and his disciples when reading and quoting from them. Jesus himself made many prophetic statements, different, but none the less powerful proof of the validity of the New Testament's portrayal of Christ.

In 1946 AD the Dead Sea Scrolls, dating back to the time of Christ and earlier, were found and pieced together. These manuscripts formed almost entirely the text of the old testament. The many scribes commissioned to copy these, were known to take extreme care to ensure the accuracy of translation, making sure they copied each script word for word as originally written.

The great new testament archaeologist Sir William Ramsey says of the apostle Luke's writings. Quote "Luke is a first rate historian, not only are his statements fact, he produces a true sense of history. The author should be placed alongside the greatest of historians. No statement in the New Testament to this date has ever been disputed."

Bibliography

New International Topical Study Bible, Author as above, Zondervan Corp 1984
Morris Henry M, Many Infallible Proofs, Master Books Inc. October 2005

Level Two

Judge: Janice Gillgren

Requirement: Write a letter of sympathy appropriate for a friend or family member who is dealing with grief and in need of hope. 200 words.

General Comments

Who doesn't keep a stack of old letters sent to them many years ago, before the days of emails and social media posts? There's something so appealing and enduring about letters.

Letter-writing is a valuable skill and some people have done it as a unique ministry. What I looked for in this entry was a well-expressed and genuine-sounding letter, with a hopeful message.

I was pleased with the level of entries, with most of them having a genuine tone of sympathy and offering sound hope. Jean Crane best fulfilled the requirements, followed by Caroline Cook (2nd), then Felicity Logan (3rd). Well done to you all.

Spelling was excellent in all the entries, but punctuation needed some more work. Word count was also excellent in nearly every letter.

In a personal letter, your language needs to sound natural. We can and should be gentle and kind when showing sympathy, so use passive writing more freely than in other forms of writing but don't use it in every sentence, or it weakens your message. Passive writing sometimes also leads to convoluted and unclear sentences.

'Hope' is a bolder emotion and is better expressed with active language. Jesus used simple, active language that was clear and effective, which is why we quote from so much of his teaching.

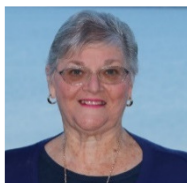
Letters of sympathy are improved by conveying a sense of empathy as well. According to my Webster's Dictionary, sympathy means 'feelings of pity and sorrow for someone else's misfortune', whereas empathy means 'the ability to understand and share the feelings of another'.

Pity and sorrow on their own can seem shallow or even condescending, but empathy is getting alongside the other person. This is the primary difference between a letter, such as you may find on a ready-made card, and a personal letter. A generic letter cannot offer genuine empathy because the letter writer doesn't know the card recipient.

Commas are a very useful but sometimes confusing punctuation tool. When we speak, we use pauses for effect and sensibility, and commas are the literary equivalent. We sometimes pause while speaking at places we don't (or shouldn't) pause when writing, however, so if we 'write as we speak', the result can be confusing.

For example: 'The card I gave you, is the same as the one you gave me'. When you speak this sentence, you might pause where the comma is because you want to emphasise the rest of the sentence, which is okay. However, in writing, the comma separates the two principal parts of the sentence (the subject and the predicate) causing both to be incomplete. If you wanted to create the same emphasis in your writing, you could add a short parenthetical phrase: 'The card I gave you is, in fact, the same as ...'

First Place



Jean
Crane
of Tauranga

To Comfort You

Dear Betty,

How very sorry I was to hear of your mother's passing. My deepest and sincere sympathies are sent to you at this very sad time. May the wonderful memories of your mum bring you comfort. She was such a generous and caring person and so proud of you. She brought joy to us all with her endless energy.

I know you will miss her dreadfully, but we can rejoice in the fact that she is in heaven with her Lord and Saviour, the God she loved so much, and served so faithfully.

'Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His faithful servants.' Psalm 116:15.

We don't always understand why things happen the way they do, but we know we have a God who comforts and strengthens us in His own special way.

May I encourage you to put your trust in Him. He knows how you are feeling. Tell him your needs every day and experience the peace only He can give.

Please let me know if there is any way I can be of help.

Praying that God's choicest blessings will bring you comfort and peace.

All my love,

Jean.

Second Place



Caroline
Cook
of Auckland

My dearest Sonya

I was so sad to hear of the untimely loss of dear Jimmy. My heart goes out to you.

If we were not in lockdown, I would visit you with our favourite carrot cake in hand so we would cry together. I am so sorry I cannot be with you right now. Please know that my thoughts and prayers are with you as you grieve the loss of your precious son.

One of my favourite Bible verses is Matthew 28.20. It quotes Jesus as saying: "I am with you always." I hope you find comfort in this verse in the days and weeks ahead as you trust in our Lord for strength.

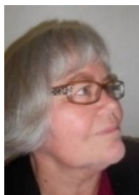
I have seen you rely on our Lord through your hardships in years gone by. He is your strength and your comfort at this time also. And please remember, the sun will shine in your life again. There are brighter days ahead.

The book accompanying this card, is the same book that you gifted to me after my son's fatal accident. I found it so helpful at the time. Now it is your turn to find comfort from between those pages.

Love and Blessings

Caroline

Third Place



Felicity
Logan
of Feilding

Dearest Ruth...

Dearest Ruth...

Since returning from Derek's funeral there's still that sting of loss. Too few the times we were all four together!

You'll be facing confusing decisions alone. Calling spouses "the other half" rings so true at this time. But now as ever, you're called to be complete in Christ [Colossians 4:2].

Can you imagine angels exulting at Derek's arrival? Psalm 116:15 describes the death of a believer as "precious in the sight of the Lord"! We say "promotion to glory": these aren't empty words. He's in Eternity -- your destiny also.

Remember: to live is Christ (that's your task) and to die is gain [Philippians 1:21]. Dear Ruth, make Christ your centre, hemming in everything with prayer. No rushed decisions!

Take or make opportunities to rejoice in company, go on beach weekends and bushwalks to rejoice in nature. Cry readily -- then mop tears and tackle a task.

My offside -- money-cruncher cum amateur lawyer -- would gladly be your sounding-board. I'll be in behind, regardless. We're currently looking into retirement villages, and would happily share our impressions.

Call on us any time! You're in our minds and prayers, as is your family.

Your friend from old, Sandy.

Level Three

Judge: Julia Martin

Requirement: Choose a parable Jesus told, as recorded in the New Testament, and rewrite it in a modern, contemporary version while retaining its meaning and significance. 250 words.

General Comments

Storytelling has existed from the beginning of time, fulfilling many purposes including entertainment and the imparting of knowledge and wisdom.

When Jesus was on earth he proved to be a master story teller. In the four New Testament gospels, we find 35 stories or parables that Jesus told to the people of the day. The word 'parable' literally means 'brought alongside'. A parable therefore takes something that is familiar and uses it to illustrate a truth that may not be known by the hearers.

The parables he told helped people understand spiritual truths by using everyday objects, scenes, or relationships such as a farmer sowing seed or an unforgiving debtor. While this sounds straightforward, not everybody got the message; for despite the fact that the examples Jesus used were plain and simple for all his listeners, the spiritual application was often hidden from those who were not ready or willing to act upon it.

Even the learned ones often missed the spiritual truth because they were spiritually proud, prejudiced or unwilling to change their ways. For those who were honestly seeking with open hearts however, the truth became clear. In some ways this method of storytelling is similar to the old adage 'show don't tell' which is an aspect of good writing and one we should constantly keep in mind.

This assignment involved the rewriting of a New Testament parable into a modern, contemporary version while retaining the parable's meaning and significance. Each of the three entrants adapted the original version by using aspects of our modern technology, language, or way of life.

John based his entry on the story of the good seed and the weeds (maliciously sown) growing up together until the final harvest. Even the disciples missed the meaning here and had to ask Jesus for the explanation. John's analogy of the goings-on of a modern day sport's team is convincing and well-written.

Jean used the well-known parable of the lost son and used modern terms such as 'reverse mortgages' and an 'OE' which gave a fresh approach to an old story.

I particularly liked Pat's version of the five wise and five foolish bridesmaids with cell phones replacing oil lamps, but was disappointed with the short length of her entry.

Overall, the three entries were a pleasure to judge and I thank the members for their attempts.

First Place



John
Lindsay
of Christchurch

No Place for Weed

Thank you for coming to help our team celebrate a successful season. Make sure you get a close look at this impressive trophy before you leave.

If you don't know me, I'm Coach Davidson.

Our success comes after three years' hard work, starting as a young development squad. Back then, the coaching staff called them 'sprouts' and when the team discovered this recently they were not amused.

Anyway, they've worked hard to learn the skills, rehearse our set plays and build their stamina.

If you've lived with these athletes, you'll know it hasn't been easy. Especially for those who've been injured or struggled to stay fit.

Our captain, Caleb, has exceeded my expectations, encouraging and supporting his team mates.

We made good progress last year but just as we were preparing for this season, a new crisis hit us.

Caleb heard stories of players being offered marijuana. Apparently someone wanted to undermine our reputation.

What should we do?

Caleb pushed me to confront it straight away, but I didn't want to hurt any player through making false accusations.

Within a few weeks it became obvious that some had accepted the drugs. They became less committed to the team and started to undermine the morale of the whole group.

Just before we played in the finals we had to dismiss them.

They left in disgrace and will not play in these competitions again.

But those who stayed clean have truly earned this trophy and the honour given to champions.

Reference: Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

Second Place



Jean
Shewan

of
Christchurch

A Father's Love

"What's this?" Garry looked at the pamphlet his daughter thrust in front of him.

"Reverse mortgages. I thought you could raise one on the farm so I could have my share of the inheritance now." Shelley wheedled.

"Are you wishing me dead, them? What's so important that you need the money now?"

"All my friends are going on their OE and I want to join them. They have all got their own money,"

After much debate, Gary agreed, and Shelley joined her friends.

At first Shelley was in touch regularly, telling about all the things the group had seen and done, but gradually the calls decreased. She no longer seemed to have anything to share with her family. Finally, she rang home, tearfully begging for help.

"I'm so sorry Dad, Please, can you send my fare home. I promise I'll pay you back, even if I have to work on the farm for years. I've got no money and I'm so lonely."

Saddened that she'd had to learn such a hard lesson, Gary sent the money immediately and organized a welcome home party.

But her brother, John, was angry.

"I've worked for years without a holiday or anything, just so she could gallivant around. That's so unfair!"

"It may seem that way, Son," Garry said his voice choked with emotion. "If you'd asked you could've had whatever you wanted. But I thought I'd lost Shelley and we would never see her again. It means everything to know she is OK,

Third Place



Pat Kerr
of Roxburgh

Flat Batteries

The ten young girls were so excited. Their Superhero was due in town at any moment. They couldn't wait to meet him in person, courtesy of their e-tickets, valid only from their personal cell-phones.

They were primped and preened, looking their most gorgeous, but time passed. They all fell asleep.

Suddenly five cell-phones beeped announcing his imminent arrival. Five cell-phones remained silent. Distraught, the five with flat phones asked the others if they could borrow their portable chargers.

"No way," came the reply, "buy your own!"

So the five hurried off to the nearest 24 hour dairy.

Meanwhile the Superhero arrived. The five with valid e-tickets followed him into the Stadium and the gates were locked.

When the tardy five arrived demanding to be let in, the Superhero's recorded message activated:

"The gate is locked. No late admissions."

Always check the fine print when you buy anything.

Make sure you follow all instructions.

In this case, no late entries were allowed.

Crossword Solution for page 21

Across: 7. Rescue 8. Chapel 10. Mundane 11. Arrow 12. Aunt 13. Utter 17. Theme 18. Fair 22. Radio 23. Natives 24. Change 25. Patron

Down: 1. Grammar 2. Asinine 3. Mural 4. Shearer 5. Apart 6. Clown 9. Testament 14. Throngs 15. Calvary 16. Present 19. Track 20. Ideas 21. Stray

Writing Competitions Points Board

In each magazine, place-getters receive points: 15 points for first, 12 points for second and 9 points for third. At the end of May and November, highest points in Levels One and Two are awarded monetary prizes for first, second and third. Level Three points are tallied at the end of November. To be **promoted** to Level Two or Three, contestants need to receive points at least three times on their current level. Our judges also require regular entries and improved writing. Our next prize-winners will be published in the Dec 2020-Jan 2021 edition.

Prizes are: \$60 for First Place, \$50 for Second Place \$40 for Third place.

Level One		Level Two		Level Three	
Jackie Davey	21	Allison Wilson	15	John Lindsay	54
Christine Platt	15	Jean Crane	15	Jean Shewan	42
Jill Clarke	15	Pauline Marshall	12	Pat Kerr	39
Taryn Dryfhout	12	Caroline Cook	12	Lois Farrow	24
Ricolene Gounden	9	Felicity Logan	9	Keith Willis	12
Corrine Sinclair	9			Sue Thatcher	9

It's fantastic to see all these names on the Points Board. Great job everyone who has been entering this year, whether you've earned points or not. We have one more competition for 2020 before we tally the final points. As you can see above, anything can happen, so keep those wonderful entries coming in for our judges!

Competitions for December 2020

Due by November 1st

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 what level you're on, email Debbie McDermott at:
level1@nzchristianwriters.org

Entries are judged on: Entering, format and layout 15%, Topic requirements 25%, Creativity, flow and impact 25%, Grammar and punctuation 25%, Spelling 10%.

Level One—for members 16 years old and over

Requirement: Take a real-life incident that happened to you one Christmas Day and re-tell it as a fictional short story with fictional characters. 400 words.

Email entry to Debbie McDermott at level1@nzchristianwriters.org



Debbie

Level Two—for members 16 years old and over

Requirement: 'A sparrow and an eagle chat one day.' Write a humorous story based on a conversation between these two birds to contrast and illustrate the widely different perspectives people may have on life. Compose your own title and write mostly dialogue. 250 – 300 words.

Email entry to Janice Gillgren at level2@nzchristianwriters.org



Janice

Level Three—for members 16 years old and over

Requirement: Write a funny story starting with the line: "You'll never guess what happened..."

300 words maximum.

Email entry to Julia Martin at level3@nzchristianwriters.org



Julia



NZ CHRISTIAN WRITERS is a nationwide collective of authors, bloggers, editors, lyricists, poets, publishers, songwriters, storytellers and writers throughout New Zealand. Along with our bi-monthly magazines and competitions we offer inspiring seminars and writers retreats to encourage, inspire and upskill people in their writing.

NZ Christian Writers' vision is to cultivate a vibrant community of Christian writers by connecting them to other like-minded writers in New Zealand. We welcome both beginner and experienced writers.