



OCT 2020 - JAN 2021

YOUNG

CHRISTIAN WRITER

Look INSIDE For :

Short Story Competition

Poetry

Encouragement for
Young Writers

Author Interviews

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.*

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

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

Young Christian Writer is our student magazine published three times a year by NZ Christian Writers. We also publish a bimonthly magazine, **The Christian Writer**. All members receive both magazines digitally. A printed copy of *Young Christian Writer* will be sent to all student print subscribers automatically and to full membership print subscribers by request. Contributions from members are always welcome. Submissions should be emailed as a Word document no more than 500 words long. If you have an item or an event of interest do send it to the editor for consideration by the 10th of the month before the next publication date.

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.

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Website:

Check out our website for interesting information, such as who our board members are, how to join us and to view copies of past magazines.

Members with published items have a free profile page on our site to promote their work. Please encourage other Christian writers you know to join us via our website:

www.nzchristianwriters.org

President's Note



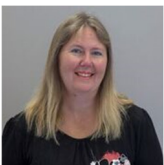
Welcome to our third edition of *Young Christian Writer*. This special magazine is designed with youth in mind and is prepared to help inspire young writers with their writing. We are excited to see several schools starting to stock this magazine as an inspirational resource in their classrooms and libraries. Our team trust you are encouraged by the content you see and hope you enjoy our magazine.

In our magazines, you'll find a collection of fun competitions, free giveaways, powerful poetry, amazing articles, short stories, puzzles, art, photography, book reviews and more. Feel free to reach out to our friendly magazine editor, Kathryn, with your entries for our Short Story competition on page eleven. We also welcome your ideas for what you would like to see in future editions of *Young Christian Writer*.

Do join us if you would like to receive this magazine regularly. We have special Student Membership rates available. Included in your membership is *The Christian Writer* magazine with a digital or printed subscription available. As a collective of Christian writers, we value Christian faith, God's Word, professionalism, quality and social outreach. We pray these values also resonate with you.

Justin St. Vincent, President, NZ Christian Writers

"Hi!" From the Editor



In some ways 2020 has been like a rollercoaster ride. It would be easy to allow the circumstances to unsettle us, but with Jesus on our ride we can have peace and even enjoy the unexpected ups and downs.

I invited Jesus into my 'ride of life' when I was ten. Sadly, no one helped me with what to do next. It seemed to me like nothing had changed so I carried on with life as if nothing had changed. Looking back, I see I needed to understand Jesus had sent me the Holy Spirit who is a person to be communicated with and whose presence can be felt. I didn't know I could be guided by the Holy Spirit in all the important decisions I needed to make. As a result, I made a lot of bad choices. I did my own thing until my life became a real mess.

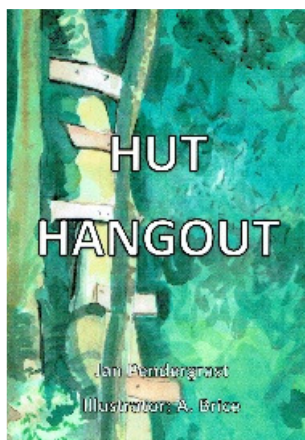
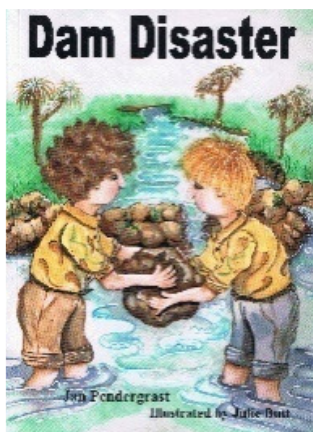
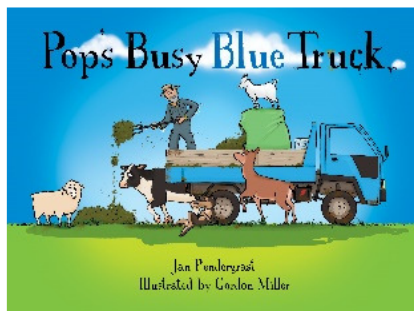
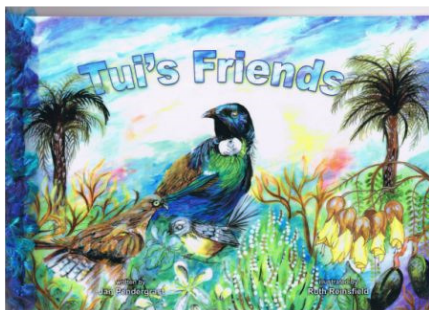
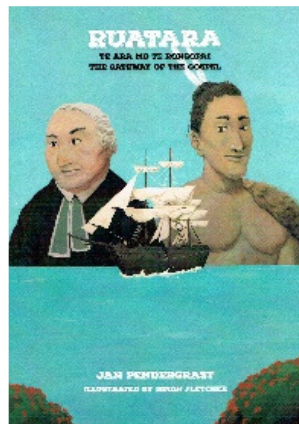
At nineteen I realised I needed to get my life right with God before anything in my life was going to come right. It's been an exciting journey with God since then. Jesus said the Holy Spirit is our Helper. I've found it's possible to live, listening for when the Holy Spirit speaks. At any time, you can ask Him to help you, including with your writing.

Blessings and Love in Jesus, Kathryn

Interview with Jan Pendergrast, Author of children's books, including *Ruatara*

by Kathryn Paul

Recently I interviewed Jan Pendergrast, New Zealand author of *Ruatara* and other children's books. Following is what Jan shared with readers of *Young Christian Writer* magazine.





QUESTION: How old were you when you discovered you liked writing?

ANSWER:

I was about ten years old. I remember being complimented on a piece of writing about how 'foreboding' the main doors of Dannevirke Hospital were. My year of inspiration was 2000 when I decided as a school librarian that children's books would be easy to write. I discovered NOT! However, I persevered and succeeded.

QUESTION: What inspired the content of your books?

ANSWER:

The world around me. I live in an amazing place, on a farm surrounded by bush and birds, creeks and rivers and trees which inspired my picture books and easy reads. My interest in early NZ Christian history led to my entering a NZCW short story competition where I wrote 2,000 words about *Ruatara*. Later I turned it into a novelette of 13,000 words for ten to fourteen year-olds. I wrote a small '*Powerful Punctuation*' booklet which resulted from judging competitions where I realised how many writers could not 'do' correct punctuation.

QUESTION: How did you decide on and produce the illustrations?

ANSWER:

The illustrations in my five books have been done by five different people! Not ideal, I know. A friend illustrated *Tui's Friends*. *Dam Disaster's* illustrator, who was recommended by a writers' group friend, didn't want to do *Hut Hangout*, so another friend's daughter agreed to do that book.

A friend from church jumped at the opportunity to illustrate *Pop's Busy Blue Truck*, which is now available in Te Reo. I asked on the Bible and Treaty Facebook page if anyone would be interested in illustrating *Ruatara*.

QUESTION: How long did it take you to write your first book?

ANSWER:

Tui's Friends began as an assignment for our local writer's group. It was one of those infrequent times of inspiration when everything 'fell' together quickly. With adding improvements from our group's critiquing, it would have taken a month.

QUESTION: What kinds of places have you visited or been a speaker at, due to your role as an author?

ANSWER:

I haven't been in great demand as an author. I have spoken about Writing for Children at a NZCW retreat and workshop, as well as visiting a primary school with Tui's Friends and Dam Disaster. Oh, and I spoke to a seniors group at church.

QUESTION: Is there anything else you'd like to share with young Christian writers?

ANSWER:

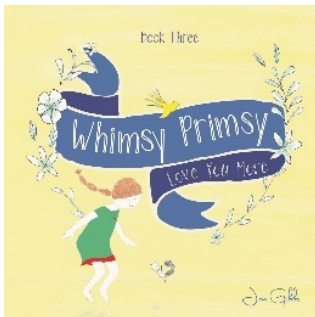
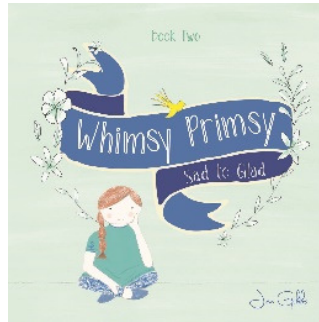
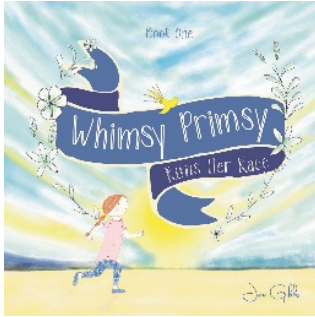
I would like to encourage young Christian writers to write in as many genre as possible. Doing this will show them what they can do (they will be surprised) and increase their opportunities for publication. Make an effort to improve their craft by doing and attending courses and seminars, and entering competitions. Listen to advice. Take it on board. There is always room for improvement. Remember, if your readers can't understand what you have written, or it is full of spelling and grammar errors, they will give up. You have something worthwhile to say, so say it well.

'You can make anything by writing.'

C.S. Lewis

Interview with Jennifer Gibbs, Author of *She* and the children's series *Whimsy Primsy*

by Kathryn Paul



Recently I interviewed Jennifer Gibbs, award-winning author of *She*. Read what Jennifer shared with *Young Christian Writer* magazine:



QUESTION: How old were you when you discovered you liked writing?

ANSWER:

I was an awkward 11-year-old with buck teeth and transparent skin, and I had a teacher who had thick fluffy hair and was a vegetarian and she made us write a creative story every week. She spoke to my mum about how good my writing was and that made me love it even more. But being a writer wasn't something that was a 'career' so I mostly kept it to myself until the time was right.

QUESTION: What inspired the content of your books?

ANSWER:

God.

QUESTION: How did you decide on and produce the illustrations?

ANSWER:

I found out how much it would cost to get an illustrator and suddenly I thought my sketches might be good enough after all! (Things have changed now. You can go to certain websites where illustrators bid for the job which has made it far more accessible). Joy Cowley says she'd never illustrate her own books because a story is half told by the illustrations and illustrators can bring a whole other dimension to the story.

QUESTION: How long did it take you to write your first book?

ANSWER:

Three years... but it was a big one with a tonne of research. The *Whimsy Primsy* books I wrote straight away. Primsy jumped into my head and away I went!

QUESTION: What kinds of places have you visited or been a speaker at, due to your role as an author?

ANSWER:

I've been to quite a few places as a writer - as local as the library and school down the road and as far afield as the Gold Coast, Sydney and Adelaide. But it's the people I've met who are more notable. I've met so many interesting people along the way and that's the real adventure.

QUESTION: Is there anything else you'd like to share with Young Christian writers?

ANSWER:

Keep going! It takes tenacity and a thick skin. Be fearless in your writing and fearless in the face of opposition.

Tips For Writing a Short Story

by Kathryn Paul

It can be helpful to brainstorm your outline for the story by writing key-words on a page. Write down what you want to achieve with the story. Think of your story in three parts, the beginning, middle and the end. Will you have a low point or crisis for the character?

Decide who your main character is and give attention to creating who they are. You don't have to include all their details in the story, but it will help you make them sound real.

Plan whether you're going to write in first person, *I fell off my bike on my way to the park*, or third person, *Stella fell off her bike on her way to the park*. Once you've decided, you must stay consistent with this throughout the story.

Show what's happening by using speech and activity, rather than just *telling* or *explaining*. Try creating curiosity with unanswered questions. This grabs and holds a reader's attention. It helps make the reader want to know what happens next.

Your ending can be a surprise, an unexpected twist or simply a satisfactory conclusion. Ask yourself if you achieved what you wrote in your outline.

Ask someone good at English to proofread your story. Make the necessary changes.

If it's for a competition and is longer than the maximum word count, you must figure out which bits to take out without spoiling your story. Keep only the most important details that are relevant. Ensure your entry complies with the competition's instructions.

Short Story Competition!

**Prizes to be Won: \$30.00 Christian
Bookshop Vouchers!**

We didn't receive any entries into our poetry competition, so our Christian bookshop shopping vouchers are still up for grabs. This competition is for short stories. The question is, are there any young Christian writers out there willing to give our next challenge a go?

Competition Details and How to Enter:

For this writing challenge you need to write a story about your own imaginary **online game**. The **characters** or **avatars** need to be **from the Bible**. You must communicate the description of your imaginary online game in the form of a **story**. You can use any of your favourite game apps for inspiration and think of a movie like *Jumanji*. But make sure your version of a *Bible Jumanji* or a *Bible Pet Rescue*, for example, is your own original idea. Maximum length for your story is 1000 words. It can be as short as you like but don't go over 1000 words.

You need to become a member of NZ Christian Writers to enter the competition. This is so you can receive your own copy of our magazine and see your work in print. If you are not a member yet please join and enter the competition!

Visit www.nzchristianwriters.org/join/ and see page two for payment details.

Email your entry as a typed, word-document, attached with your name, age and school. Or scan or photograph a handwritten copy of your story and email it as an attachment, but it must be printed tidily so it's easy to read. Email your entry to: Kathryn at editor@nzchristianwriters.org.

There are two new age categories for this competition. They are: **Fourteen years and under**, and **Fifteen years to Twenty-five years**.

PRIZES: Each first-place winner will receive a Christian Bookshop voucher valued at \$30.00.

Entries must be sent in before December 1st 2020.

Winners will be notified by email and we will endeavour to send out the prizes before December 25th. First-place-winners from both age categories will be published in the next issue of *Young Christian Writer* magazine. Depending on room, highly commended entries will also be published.

FICTION: SHORT STORY

Sweet Surf

by Kathryn Paul

Sixteen-year-old Suzy glanced over her shoulder and began to paddle hard. The rising wave made her surfboard pick up speed. In one quick move she stood. She felt a moment of elation then wiped out and was flung into the foaming water.

Seconds later her head broke the surface. She spat out saltwater and glanced toward Matt to see if he'd noticed. She'd met him for the first time today when he'd offered her some surfing-tips. Right now, he was focused on paddling oceanward.

A laugh bubbled out of her. *What's gotten into me?* she wondered. *I've been so depressed I haven't laughed in ages.* She paddled back out until she saw another breaker building. Swiftly she turned the board back to shore and began to paddle. She leapt up and rode the wave a few metres before falling.

Suddenly Matt was beside her, sitting on his board. "Awesome! You're learning fast."

She pulled herself back onto her board and sat straddling it, "Thanks. How long have you been a surfer?"

"My parents were part of a Christian surfer's group and took me with them as a kid."

"Christian surfers?" Suzy had been to a church only once. No one had mentioned surfing. "Did Jesus surf?" she asked sincerely.

Matt laughed, "I reckon it's logical He can surf. He created the waves and He knew we'd enjoy surfing. He walked on water – surfing would come easy."

Suzy nodded. "Makes sense, I guess, if He's real and all that."

He grinned. "Now I've got this awesome picture in my head. The disciples are in their boat in the stormy waves and Jesus glides past, barefoot-surfing saying, 'It's sweet surf tonight – later dudes,' and they all freak out."

Suzy laughed.

Matt's expression became earnest, "Seriously though, He's real. He's everything to me. You don't know Him yet?"

She shook her head, smiling. "How can you know Him? This conversation is bizarre."

Matt's brown eyes were sparkling and kind. "I believe God wants me to tell you He loves you. He's seen your loneliness and depression and wants to help you. Just like a wave – if you move toward Him and let Him carry you, you'll catch the best ride ever."

Suzy felt goose bumps. Could God be real? Could He see her and her struggles? Did He care?

"I have been depressed," she admitted. "Sometimes I feel like I'm going nowhere."

"You have somewhere to go – into God's love. If you're willing, I'd like to lead you in a prayer and you can begin your journey with Him."

Tears moistened Suzy's eyes as she nodded and repeated the words Matt guided her to say.

Afterwards Matt let out a whoop, playfully splashing her. "Welcome into God's family, Suzy! Have a think about something. I know a place where you can learn about God and how to get closer to Him. Plus, you get to go surfing and make good friends. If you want, I can hook you up."

She nodded, "Sounds cool."

"Sweet. Let's go surf!" Matt paddled away.

Suzy followed and rode the next wave in, standing on her board, grinning from ear to ear. At last she felt her life was going in the right direction.



Pet Poem



Pippa the Border Collie

Photo by Tikvah Drinkwater

Two Best Friends

by Kathryn Paul

Dogs are a blessing
From God up above
Reflect his kind heart
Most of all His love.

Just one soft-eyed look
From loving brown eyes
Enough to melt hearts
Armoured in disguise.

It's not by mere chance
The word *God* reversed
Is people's best friend
Two loves well-dispersed.

I Like What I See

by Rod Hickman

I see all the problems that you
have there

Do you think that I don't care
Just know I will always be true
Cause I think night and day,
always of you

And.....I like what I see!
For you're a reflection of me
I see you as a history maker
A game changer, a world shaker

So please don't worry, please
don't fret
I'll never fail and on that you can
bet

Cause I like what I see!
You're a reflection of me

Yes I know there are problems
you face
Just know I'll provide all the grace
For I like what I see
Cause you're a reflection of me.



What I Wish Someone had Told Me at School as a Future Writer

by Kathryn Paul

- There *is* a future as a writer – it's a genuine occupation. If you enjoy writing, find out what you must learn in order to do it well and go for it.
- Typing skills help a lot and become easier and faster with practise.
- Computer technology skills are valuable, including using social media, creating websites and blogging.
- Learning English, languages, spelling, punctuation and grammar does make a difference to the quality and success of your written work.
- History becomes fascinating if you want to write something historical. I recommend *Mark of the Lion* series by Francine Rivers as an example.
- Business skills including marketing and selling can give you an advantage.
- Science fiction and science fantasy do need research into real science to help make these stories believable.
- Learning to research topics can be fun and beneficial to your life-choices.
- There are many 'genres' or writing 'styles'. You don't have to like them all, but you can get good at what *you* enjoy and get paid to do it.
- Writing is part of communication and will always be an essential job. It's something you can do from home if you want to be there for family.
- Journalism needs many people with courage and integrity.
- Writing isn't about hiding away in a room. It's about meeting people and enjoying new experiences. Often it includes public speaking.
- Writing and publishing is a team effort. You will end up working with others and needing others' expertise.
- It's okay to believe in yourself, your work, your ability to write well and to promote it. Writing is a gift from God. His Bible is always number one!

Photo: Light Reflection on page 12 was taken by Kathryn Paul at Ahipara. Surfing photo on page 14 was taken by Sherri Bee in Dunedin. We trust you've enjoyed this issue of Young Christian Writer magazine. Keep looking to the most creative person of all, Jesus Christ. He will use your creativity to help others! With Love in Jesus, from Kathryn.



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.