

Young Christian Writer

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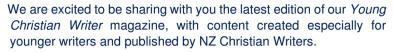
Send in your writing to be published in *Young Christian Writer* magazine! We will publish as many as space allows. Email your writing to Kathryn at ycwmag@nzchristianwriters.org

Website:

Check out our website for how to join us and to view copies of past magazines. Paying members with published items can have a free profile page on our site to promote their work. Please encourage other young Christian writers you know to join us via our website:

www.nzchristianwriters.org

President's Note



Just recently we've had more young writers join us by subscribing to our free digital-only version of this magazine. If you'd like to receive a printed version, you are very welcome to join us with the special

subsidised Student Rate of \$35 per year. Join us here: www.nzchristianwriters.org/join/

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In addition, I encourage you to engage with our magazine editor, Kathryn, who does a brilliant job collaborating with various members to produce our *Young Christian Writer* magazine. She values featuring your inspirational poems, stories, articles, competitions, interviews, and much more. You may contact Kathryn here: ycwmag@nzchristianwriters.org

I trust you enjoy reading this new edition of Young Christian Writer.

Justin St. Vincent, President, NZ Christian Writers

"Hi!" From the Editor



A huge welcome to all our new subscribers who have been able to connect with our magazine due to the free digital subscription. We are so happy you're here!

What kinds of things do you like to write about? What kind of writing is your favourite to write or to read? What would you like to see in this magazine? Drop me an email and let me know!

The main purpose of this magazine is to encourage you along your writing journey. Everyone has something to say and writers love to learn how to communicate creatively and get their readers' attention.

God loves it when we use the ability He's given us, to write for His good purposes. He loves it when we share His love and hope with others.

Don't you love a poem with a sparkle of hope in it? Or a story that makes you laugh and lifts your spirits? Or a Bible devotion that reminds you how much you are loved? One of my favourite things I write are puppet shows and I like the script to achieve all of those things.

Write me an email and share with our readers your future writing dreams!

With love in Jesus Christ, from Kathryn

Short Story Competition Results Feb-May 2022 Young Christian Writer

Congratulations to Joshua Holland, who is the first place winner of our Short Story competition. Your prize of a \$30 Manna Store evoucher will arrive in your inbox soon! We have published the top three entries. Points were very close between them. The competition instructions were:

Write a short story with a Christian message beginning with the words:

Lily the labrador whined. Her head rested on Jonah's knee. She looked at him with soft brown eyes and...

The winning story, *Luther* by Joshua, was creative and active with plenty of dialogue. Although at times it was tricky to tell who was speaking, Joshua did well to keep the character of Lily included throughout the story.

A very close second was the story *Always Belonged* by Taylor Foster. This story is well written and placed only a few points behind first place because there was more 'telling' than 'showing'.

Amelia Scowen sent in the story, *Undeserved Kindness*. This story was also very well written but sadly lost points due to not having the competition starter about Lily included. This great story deserves to be published along with the others.

Well done to our competition entrants – you've done a great job and your Christian messages were excellent. Thank you for entering and giving our readers the pleasure of enjoying your wonderful stories!

Luther

by Joshua Holland

Lily the Labrador whined; her head rested on Jonah's knee. Looking at him with soft brown eyes, she finally sat up. Jonah's best friend, Luan, was beside him.

"How did we get here?" asked a frustrated Jonah.

"What should I know about that?" replied an even more frustrated Luan.

"I think, possibly, I've figured it out!" cried Jonah at last.

"Yes?"

Cool Story.

"We are in an alternate universe."

"How do we get out?"

"Maybe this was a mistake; turn on the time machine."

"Nothing's a mistake."

Excited, Luan entered, '15.16.21' onto the keypad. Jonah switched a couple of levers – at random – hoping for something to happen and they heard a humming sound. Lily ran around barking. Once they landed, they stepped outside, and their smiles faded. Unfortunately, they were in an old-looking city. "Jonah? This looks like our own reality, to you?" shouted Luan. Making a hushing sound, he slowly pointed towards a big palace, with humungous steps. In front of them, were men dressed in black handing out papers. Gazing around, they saw a man walking up the stairs. Anger flashed through his face.

"What's going on here?" asked Jonah to one of the men.

"Do you have any dead relations?"

"Not that I- I wouldn't... no, of course not."

"Would you like to offer a dime to the church to release anyone from purgatory?"

"Excuse me? A dime?"

Suddenly, another man came into the conversation. This man was the same one they had spotted.

"Do not the scriptures say: believe in Jesus, and you shall be saved?"

"That's not what our pastors teach us! God needs to be offered riches in exchange for a brilliant eternal life."

"Just because the people can't read, does not mean you shall deceive them!"

Angrily, the man walked off, accompanied by Luan, Jonah, and Lily. "Who are you?" asked Luan to the man.

"My name, dear children, is Father Luther. I'm a priest of the holy church; I wish to make the people see that they're being lied to," said Father Luther.

"Didn't you drop your Master of Arts?"

"I was caught in a thunderstorm, and I prayed to God."

"Woof!" said Lily.

"What is it? What's wrong?"

Suddenly, in the distance, Jonah spotted a person.

"They found me; they shouldn't have, but they did. Father Luther, please go and hide, Luan and I need to run."

Father Luther replied, "No way am I hiding."

"You will - for the meantime - hide."

Jonah, Luan, and Lily ran off to find their machine. When they did find it, they immediately pressed a bunch of random buttons and switched it on. "I don't care where we are," said Jonah, "But if we're away from them, then we are fine." Cautiously, they stepped outside.

Luan asked a horrified-looking traveler, "What year is it?"

"Uh- It- well- it is 1523," replied the traveler.

"Do you know where Father Luther is?" asked Jonah

"F- Father Luther... he died eight years ago."

"He's not supposed to die yet! Who killed him?"

"Probably the Pope."

Annoyed, Jonah ran off followed by Lily and Luan. Jonah ran into the city. Quickly, he figured out he was in Rome. "Jonah," said Luan, "This is bad! If Father Luther is dead, no one will understand who God really is. What if someone else – down the line – sacrifices... humans for God... or doesn't accept what you must, to go to Heaven." Suddenly, a strange man rode up to the city in a chariot.

"Welcome everybody my name – which you'll all know by now – is John Tetzel," introduced Father Tetzel.

He lit a torch and put his hand into the fire. "All of you," he said, "Would have heard about purgatory. God is angry with you all; he has sent you all to burn, eternally, in the Inferno. Jesus once said we're all sinners. This means that with the right sacrifices, riches, and offerings, we will all be saved. We need to earn our place in heaven."

Next, he took his ashen emblazed hand from the fire and showed it to the crowd. They all looked horrified. "This will be you... in purgatory. Not just the hand, however, but the entire body for eternity. Give the church a dime, for one less year in purgatory. When you've done that, come to the museum – for a couple dimes – to see the head of a disciple, the thorns of Jesus' crown, and wood from Noah's boat."

"Stop this madness at once!" yelled Jonah, while he walked up to Father Tetzel with Lily.

"Excuse me?"

"All of you have spent your whole life thinking God was angry with you, that you were born because he's not in control of Earth, that you need to earn his respects. Well, you're all wrong! I would – rightly – say that God is hurt you would think that about him!"

"I have a qualification in preaching God's word; I think I know what I'm talking about."

"Do you think he cares for you so little?"

Standing still, Father Tetzel looked at the crowd. He laughed and ordered his chariot, which was almost too large for the streets, to carry on. Gaping, the crowd stared on. Jonah ordered Lily to sit down. "Stop!" called out Jonah to Father Tetzel, "Stop!!"

He ran in front of the chariot and Father Tetzel stood up angrily. "What?" he shouted.

"I want to make things right. If I left, no one would understand the true mercy of God. If I stood up, some might choose to be saved. Maybe only a couple of people will accept it; I won't let the 'Holy Priests of the Church' steal money off the citizens anymore." Jonah walked off, accompanied by Luan and Lily.

"Who were those thugs, that were chasing you, Jonah?" asked Luan. He was met with silence.

"If things didn't happen for a reason, there'd be chaos," replied Jonah. Jonah flipped the switch to his time machine. They rematerialized into the future. "Our next stop: 2045," said Jonah, looking worried.

Always Belonged

By Taylor Foster

Lily the Labrador whined. Her head rested on Jonah's knee. She looked at him with soft brown eyes and felt, for the first time, a sense of security and peace. Jonah rubbed his hand gently along her brown, ruffled coat. It was dry and brittle – in need of a good wash. Her slender body, which rested on the hard concrete, needed hearty nutrition. But most of all, her downtrodden heart was in need of love.

Jonah had been driving down a side street on his way home from work, when he'd spotted a sign on the footpath. Scribbled with chalk it read, 'Overflowing with dogs – need owners and foster homes.' Jonah's eyes had scanned it quickly but with his foot to the accelerator he'd continued past. Circling his mind was all he had to do.

His boss had advised him clearly that by the end of the day he had to have found three new employees, contacted them, and organised interviews. With a stack of more than 50 applicants his task was immense.

Though his brain was a whirlwind of applicants' names, one thing stood out – dogs in need of owners.

Someone else will do it. I'm a busy man who doesn't have time or space for such a thing, he thought. But no matter how much he fought, tugged and pulled, the thought etched away like a chisel. It engraved into his mind and eventually hit a small, tender spot in his heart.

Pulling over his car, he stopped, unable to concentrate with the emotions that swirled within him. There was a young Jonah standing amidst a busy playground. His light brown hair was unruly forming a crown atop his head. His favourite tracksuit pants clung loosely to his legs, and his blue hand-knitted jumper itched at his skin. He longed to go on the swings where a small group of other kids stood. *Perhaps they'd let me join.* Walking slowly up, he introduced himself, "Hi, I'm Jonah. Can I play with you guys?"

One boy came forward, he couldn't have been more than 10, and, looking him up and down, made an unpleasant face and said with a snigger, "Play? Play with us? You in your Nana's jumper? Get lost Granny's boy!" The group laughed and young Jonah, holding back tears, left that playground never to return.

This memory surfaced in Jonah's brain, washing him with the old emotions. He remembered the anger – how could such a little kid be so nasty. What right did he have to push people of the playground? And then there was shame. Deep-rooted shame, dark and twisted with the shadow of abandonment and rejection.

Jonah had grown, in years and maturity, but this one moment affected his everyday life from there on out. At high school, he isolated himself from the class, for fear of rejection. Lunch times were a nightmare, where he hid away in the library, lost in his thoughts. When speeches came around he was taunted by imaginary laughs. Around his head statements of rejection spun – not good enough, a nobody, not important, not valuable, a nothing. Just a granny's boy.

Moving up in the world, he studied and became a Human Resources Manager for a wealthy tech company. He was belated at being accepted, making him feel worthy. But every day, his boss saw some fault, and though said kindly, it lingered in the place of shame.

These moments rushed back to Jonah as he thought of the dogs abandoned by owners and now not being accepted by anyone. He could sense their abandonment; the tears in their eyes as people passed over them saying, "too rowdy", "not right", "not good enough". He understood like no one else the feeling of rejection. But Jonah, once locked in his own cage of shame, had been rescued, had been let out and led to a new home.

A Man with light brown skin, dark hair, and glowing as radiantly as the sun itself, had walked not only into the pound but into the cage itself. He had sat down and felt Jonah's rejection and abandonment, and said He understood. He told him that this was not the place He had designed for him. He had beautiful meadows prepared where Jonah could be free. He told him He loved him; that he was valuable, beautiful, accepted, important, and that He Himself had cared about him so deeply that He'd already died to save him. Jonah had heard these words and taking the Man's hand, who had introduced Himself as Jesus, walked with Him out of his cell. He was adopted into the loving arms of God and into His family.

Jonah had felt the pain of rejection, yet now lived in the family of God. He realised he had always belonged in Jesus' arms. As he sat in his car, with tears streaming down his face, he made the decision to do what God had done for him to one of those dogs within their cell. With a sure heart, knowing he was doing what Jesus had done, he walked into the pound.

Dogs' sad faces and pained voices filled his ears. Screams of desperation; scratches at the mesh gates searching for freedom. He wanted to help them all, but knew he himself could only aid one. He walked through until he saw a young puppy named Lily. She was hiding in the corner, a look of utter rejection on her face. With teary eyes her body shuddered with fear. As Jonah knelt before the bars she wouldn't even buy into the hope of a home. He knew this feeling. He had known her pain.

He stepped across the threshold of the cage and sitting down next to Lily, knew that he would adopt her. She would feel love, know a home, have a family. Just as Jesus had done for Jonah, Jonah would do for her.

Undeserved Kindness

by Amelia Scowen

I feel a stab of pain in my gut as Ted's fist strikes, and I double over in pain. Ted grabs me by the front of my shirt and shoves me against the cold wall.

"You big baby," he says cruelly, his face so close to mine that I feel his spit splat on it. He lifts me up in the air so my feet dangle off the floor. He's still clinging to my shirt.

"Let go of me!" I yell and kick out as hard as I can. My boot connects with Ted and he stumbles backwards, letting me go in the process. I take this opportunity to evacuate the room.

A huge crowd has gathered to watch the fight but with the help of my elbows I start gaining ground. There is a few "Hey, watch where you are going!"s before I am out of the school building and sprinting down the street. I don't run for long before I have to stop to catch my breath.

It's then that I remember that Mum had asked me to get some milk for her after school. As I take off in the direction of the store, I think about the fight. Ted had first started bullying me when I had come to school the first day at age five. I was short for my age then and Ted had taken that opportunity to bully me. He had obviously enjoyed it because he still did it till this day. Even though I am taller than him now, he still calls me a big baby because I never fight back.

I sigh and run my hands through my dark hair. Mum keeps asking if I want to go to another school but I deny it every time because that would prove that I really am a big baby.

It's then that I hear the scream. I run towards the sound. It's Anna, Ted's mum, that screamed. I follow her line of sight and see Ted standing on their two-storey house' roof. The roof is slanted and I'm surprised that Ted's not slipping.

Ted's blonde hair is blowing wildly in the wind. It reminds me of a movie I watched one time. The guy in the movie had gone loony and looked how Ted looked now.

"You get down here right now!" Anna shouts. The fear is evident in her voice. Her son ignores her and instead starts walking uphill not for long. I watch as Ted's shoes lose their grip and he starts slipping until he is hanging onto the gutter with just his fingertips. He tries to pull himself up but it's no use. Ted starts yelling for help with Anna echoing his calls. Then she notices me.

"You have to help him, Matt!" I don't hesitate and head straight for the house.

"Be careful!" Anna calls after me.

I run to the back of the house, where I know there is a ladder that leads to the roof. Climbing as fast as I can, I make it up and scramble to where Ted hangs. I start to slip and have to remind myself to slow down.

When I finally get to Ted, his face is as white as a ghost's and I can see sweat drops on his forehead. Terror is written all over him. I grab his wrists and on the count of three, hoist him up, making sure I have a good grip so I don't slip.

After we safely get to the ground, Ted crumples into a ball, covering his face with his arms. His body is shaking. After an awkward few minutes, Ted looks at me with a puzzled expression.

"Why?" he asks as I help him to his feet. He doesn't have to finish the question because I already know what he's asking. Why I would help him after all that he has done to me?

10

I don't have to answer. I just smile.

Fun Fact!

A Labrador
Vizsla Cross is
a cross
between the
Labrador
Retriever and
the Hungarian
Vizla. They are
sometimes
also called
Vizslador or
Labrala.



The real Lily who inspired the story competition starting line.

My Dog Lily

by Rowan Deacon (age twelve)

My dog is easily the best dog a boy could ever own. She is a Labrador cross Vizsla and her name is Lily. She has a beautiful orange coat with gorgeous eyes and a cute, black, leather nose. Lily is an animal but when I'm with her she is my best friend and for me she is like a human, it's like she understands everything about me and how I'm feeling.

My dog is so kind and compassionate she will always be there for me if I'm upset, she will let me cuddle her until I feel better. At home if I go outside to play, I just know that she will be outside with me in seconds even when she doesn't see me, she just knows where I am. It's something that's so special about her.

My dog's soft fur and calmness always makes me feel better. Without a doubt my dog is the most loving, kind, gentle, compassionate, understanding, amazing, playful, warm, snuggly, fun dog you will ever meet. As soon as I get home from school, she greets me with a jump and a tail wag. Smiling is one of the things that is strange about her, because when she's happy you can tell when her eyes have a happy, bright spark in them and you can see her do something with her mouth. It's sort of like a smile but with a dog's face.

Her full name is Tiger Lily because she has a few blonde stripes that run down her body and they strangely remind me of a tiger. One of the funny things she does is whenever she is happy or excited, her tail wags violently on the side of her body when she wags it and I call it the 'helicopter' because it moves as fast as a helicopter's propeller. If you ever meet her she would quickly get up on her back legs and give you a friendly lick on your face until you tell her to stop. There is so much more I could tell you but I can't put it into words. Lily is my best friend and I love her with all my heart.

Poetry Competition

Join in the writing fun by sending in your entry for our next writing competition! Here are the instructions:

Write a rhyming poem about your favourite thing or things to do. Include in the words of the poem why you feel thankful to God for those things.

Maximum word limit is 250 words. There is no minimum word limit.

Send your entries by email to ycwmag@nzchristianwriters.org with YCW Poetry Comp. in the subject line. Include your name, age and area you live in. Maximum age limit for entrants is 25 years old.

First Prize is a Manna Store eVoucher valued at \$30.00!

Deadline is 10pm 30th August 2022

Anyone up to the age of 25 is welcome to enter. There is no minimum age. If we receive a large number of entries, we will split the age groups.

More than one entry per person is permitted. There is no entry fee. Non-subscribers are welcome to enter. *Please note you can now subscribe to the digital YCW mag for free! See the link below.*

The best entries will be published in the next issue of *Young Christian Writer magazine*.

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magazine, *The Christian Writer*. Please see the last page for those subscription costs and details.

I Was In Your Car

by Rodney Hickman

I was in your car with you today But you could not see me there And I knelt down by your bedside When you were deep in prayer

And when you thought you'd missed it
And feeling all alone
That your prayers had been short circuited
Like all you had was a useless phone

Yo, I'm in big Trouble.

Still, I held there in a jar
Every teardrop as they fell
When you were under spiritual attack
From those devils there from hell

For my army of angels are always at your door Their swords are drawn, they will not leave Battle ready as I promised And on that, you can believe.

Test your proofreading skills! What's wrong with the poem below? There are ten errors to be found. You may have heard this poem on Life FM! Hint: Check for correct rhyming, rhythm and spelling. Answers are on page 14 – no peeking!

Once upon a tyme,
A writer rote a rhyme,
Butt where could it be published to be seen?

The writer heard a hint,
To get you're work in print,
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Their website is the way.
Sow the writer has joined up – very happy!

Scared

by Abigail Murray (age nine)

I heard a rustle and I heard a voice, I heard speaking and I heard a noise. I was scared.

I pulled off my blankets and got out of bed, I crept through the hallway, clutching my ted.

I prayed, "Please be Mum or Dad, not a robber, otherwise that would be bad." I peeked through the door to see what I could see, When I slowly opened the door, my Mum and Dad were watching TV!



They asked me what I was doing and I said I was getting a drink, So I went into the kitchen and stood beside the sink.

I prayed, "Thank you, thank you, my God, it's like I'm the fish and you're the fishing rod!

You have got me and I can't escape, it's like I'm attached to you with some tape!"

I went back down the hallway and got into my bed and thought, "What a lesson Satan has been taught!"

Answers to 'Test Your Proofreading Skills' on page 13:

Happy doesn't rhyme with glean or clean. os aq pinous wos .6 Zday should be today .8 Cleen should be clean ٠, Ever after doesn't have the correct rhythm .9 Great doesn't rhyme with success ٠ς You're should be your 4. Buft should be but Rote should be wrote .2 Tyme should be time ٠т. Send in poems, stories, articles, devotions or any other kind of writing! Please email your items

vcwmag@nzchristianwriters.org

or

editor@nzchristianwriters.org

Thanks for reading this issue of *Young*Christian Writer!



Mission: Connecting Christian writers in New Zealand.

Vision: To encourage and inspire Christian writers throughout New Zealand. **Values:** Christian faith, God's Word, professionalism, quality and social outreach.

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

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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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