

## Competition Topics & Criteria For 2023

Website Link: [www.nzchristianwriters.org/competitions/](http://www.nzchristianwriters.org/competitions/)

**COMPETITION COORDINATOR – DEBBIE McDERMOTT**

### JUDGES

LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2		LEVEL 3
			
Debbie McDermott	Lesley Edgeler	Cindy David	Julia Martin

### Which Level Do I enter?

- Level 1:** For new members and all other members who haven't competed enough to be promoted up to Level 2. Age limit: 16 years old or over.
- Level 2:** For members who have been promoted up from Level 1 by the judges. Age limit: 16 years old or over.
- Level 3:** For members who have been promoted up from Level 2 by the judges, plus members on the Honours List. Age limit: 16 years old or over.

**Entries are to be the sole work of the writer and no collaboration is allowed.**

If you're not sure what Level you are on, please contact the Competition Coordinator, Debbie McDermott, at [level1@nzchristianwriters.org](mailto:level1@nzchristianwriters.org)

### Formatting and Entry Guidelines and Criteria

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

**Paragraph Spacing:** 6 pt **Indentation:** None **Alignment:** Justified

**Wordcount:** Do NOT include titles, footnotes or bibliographies in the wordcount (unless informed otherwise) and ensure main content is no more than 5% above or below the wordcount. Maximum wordcounts must not be exceeded at all.

**Send a photo** of yourself for publishing purposes.

#### EMAILING YOUR ENTRY

Your entry should be emailed to the competition judge as a Microsoft or Open Office Word document attachment, complete with word count, your name and your locality, by the 1st of the month prior to the magazine's publication date. Only one entry per entrant is allowed in any given issue of the magazine.

## Prizes and Promotion Criteria

Level 1 contestants who achieve overall 1st, 2nd or 3rd place in the first three competitions of the year will be promoted up to Level 2. Level 2 contestants who achieve overall 1st or 2nd place in the first three competitions of the year will be promoted up to Level 3. Level 3 contestants who achieve overall 1st place in the first three AND the last three competitions of the year will be promoted to the Honours List. At the end of the first three competitions of the year, all contestants go back to zero points for the final three competitions of the year and the process of working towards being promoted to the next level begins again. There will be a mid-year and end-of-year awarding of certificates and prizes in the form of gift vouchers to overall Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3 winners. To be promoted to Level 2 or 3, contestants must receive points at least three times on their current Level. The judges also require regular entries plus improved writing.

## Topics

### **LEVEL ONE** Judge – Debbie McDermott

#### **FEBRUARY – due 1 January**

Write a fictional short story that is full of suspense or the unexpected and has a strong Christian takeaway message. Use the following 10 words at least once in your tale: hoot, bush, beam, shadows, pants, creak, wind, hair, stand, swing. (500 words)

**Email entry to** Debbie McDermott at [level1@nzchristianwriters.org](mailto:level1@nzchristianwriters.org)

#### **APRIL – due 1 March**

When Jesus said, “Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends” (John 15:13 NLT), He was not just referring to His crucifixion, He was also reminding His disciples to “Love one another as I have loved you” (John 13:34 NLT). Based on these verses, write a true account of how someone has ‘laid down their life’ for you or another person in some way; i.e. not necessarily physical death. (400 words)

**Email entry to** Debbie McDermott at [level1@nzchristianwriters.org](mailto:level1@nzchristianwriters.org)

#### **JUNE – due 1 May**

You have reunited with a friend you haven’t seen for a very long time, so you have lots to say to each other. Recreate the scene with plenty of dialogue between you both. (350 words)

**Email entry to** Debbie McDermott at [level1@nzchristianwriters.org](mailto:level1@nzchristianwriters.org)

#### **AUGUST – due 1 July**

Writing in the first person, put yourself into the shoes of a lesser known Bible character and tell the story of an event that happened in their life. Ensure you remain true to the facts while using your imagination to fill in the unknown. (500 words maximum)

**Email entry to** Debbie McDermott at [level1@nzchristianwriters.org](mailto:level1@nzchristianwriters.org)

### **OCTOBER – due 1 September**

Research the origins of Labour Day. Then write an article on its benefits from a Christian viewpoint and include a concise bibliography listing two to three sources from where you got your information. Your bibliography must be no more than 15% of the wordcount. (400 words, including the bibliography.)

**Email entry to** Debbie McDermott at [level1@nzchristianwriters.org](mailto:level1@nzchristianwriters.org)

### **DECEMBER – due 1 November**

Write a devotion with Christmas as its central theme. Include a Bible verse at the beginning and finish the devotion with four lines of poetry, preferably original. Don't forget to give credit to the writer if using someone else's poem and give your devotion an appropriate title. (400 words)

**Email entry to** Debbie McDermott at [level1@nzchristianwriters.org](mailto:level1@nzchristianwriters.org)

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## **LEVEL TWO Judges – Lesley Edgeler and Cindy David**

### **FEBRUARY – due 1 January**

Apart from threatening our health, the Covid-19 pandemic has precipitated a global economic crisis that closed down many businesses and caused people to lose their jobs. Write a short devotion that will bring encouragement to your readers, especially those who have been affected by the pandemic. Begin with an anecdote. (300 words)

**Email entry to** Cindy David at [level2@nzchristianwriters.org](mailto:level2@nzchristianwriters.org)

### **APRIL – due 1 March**

Research an invention that people thought impossible at the time in history. Then, based on the Scripture, 'With God all things are possible' (Mark 10:27), write about the invention and its inventor (250 words). Now share about something you have achieved for which you initially received opposition (250 words).

**Email entry to** Lesley Edgeler at [level2@nzchristianwriters.org](mailto:level2@nzchristianwriters.org)

### **JUNE – due 1 May**

Imagine finishing a non-fiction 'How-to' book in your chosen genre. Write a blurb that you intend to appear on the back cover of your book to convince readers to buy it. (200 words)

**Email entry to** Cindy David at [level2@nzchristianwriters.org](mailto:level2@nzchristianwriters.org)

### **AUGUST – due 1 July**

Chiasms are an integral concept in the Book of Psalms. Study the structure of Psalm 46 and explain (200 words including the Bible translation). Now write your own Psalm incorporating the chiasmic structure. (Maximum 12 lines)

**Email entry to** Lesley Edgeler at [level2@nzchristianwriters.org](mailto:level2@nzchristianwriters.org)

### **OCTOBER – due 1 September**

Choose an old photograph. Write a short story inspired by the picture. Include a photo of the picture with your story. (500 words)

**Email entry to** Lesley Edgeler at [level2@nzchristianwriters.org](mailto:level2@nzchristianwriters.org)

### **DECEMBER – due 1 November**

Imagine hosting a Christmas event dedicated to the homeless in your community, most of whom haven't heard about Jesus. As a host, you will be required to open the event with a prayer. Compose an encouraging prayer that will convey the true meaning of Christmas and incorporate the words 'Spirit' and 'hope'. (300 words)

**Email entry to** Cindy David at [level2@nzchristianwriters.org](mailto:level2@nzchristianwriters.org)

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### **LEVEL 3 Judge – Julia Martin**

#### **FEBRUARY – due 1 January**

Imagine you have a bucket list of things you would like to do or places you'd like to visit. Identify one and explain why it's on your list. (300 words maximum)

**Email entry to** Julia Martin at [level3@nzchristianwriters.org](mailto:level3@nzchristianwriters.org)

#### **APRIL – due 1 March**

Choose a character involved in the Easter story as recorded in the gospels. From their point of view, explain their involvement, what they experienced, and how it impacted their life. (350 words maximum)

**Email entry to** Julia Martin at [level3@nzchristianwriters.org](mailto:level3@nzchristianwriters.org)

#### **JUNE – due 1 May**

'For evil to flourish, it only takes good men and women to do nothing.'

Using this statement as a title, write an opinion piece from a Christian point of view for a secular newspaper. (400 words maximum)

**Email entry to** Julia Martin at [level3@nzchristianwriters.org](mailto:level3@nzchristianwriters.org)

#### **AUGUST – due 1 July**

From the Bible, choose a young person (named or unnamed) who witnessed a miracle. Allow him or her to tell their story in a format suitable for readers aged 8 to 12 years. (250 words)

**Email entry to** Julia Martin at [level3@nzchristianwriters.org](mailto:level3@nzchristianwriters.org)

#### **OCTOBER – due 1 September**

Write a letter to a young Christian friend or relative who is about to embark on a course of study at a secular university, advising him or her how to gain a qualification without compromising their faith and trusting in God and the Bible. (250 words)

**Email entry to** Julia Martin at [level3@nzchristianwriters.org](mailto:level3@nzchristianwriters.org)

#### **DECEMBER – due 1 November**

Write a poem in any format on a Christmas theme incorporating all five senses. (Up to 24 lines)

**Email entry to** Julia Martin at [level3@nzchristianwriters.org](mailto:level3@nzchristianwriters.org)