

51st Annual

WRITERS AND ARTISTS' CONFERENCE

CREATED

For Good Works



CHRISTIAN LIGHT

June 12, 13, 2025

THURSDAY AFTERNOON

12:00–1:00 **Pick Up Name Tags**

MODERATOR: Ken Kauffman

1:00–1:10 **Singing and Welcome**

SONG LEADER: Ivan R. Martin

1:10–1:35 **Message: Do I Have What It Takes?**

Joshua Good

1:35–1:45 **Orientation**

1:50–2:50 **WORKSHOP SESSION 1**

1.1 **ART** Beginner Class in Oil Painting, Part 1

Patience Boyd

Come learn basic methods and materials for oil painting. Practice mixing oil paint for proper value and saturation and experiment with small study paintings of simple objects. We will use water-soluble oil paints. A \$10 fee for the supplies will be payable in class.

1.2 **ARTICLES** Begin and End Like a Pro

Katrina Hoover Lee

Learn to nail beginnings and endings like a well-known Yorkshire veterinarian. This class applies to articles or short stories, with some application to longer pieces. We'll talk about transforming interviews into concise articles that nail the beginning and ending and take a look at the genius behind James Herriot's famous animal stories.

1.3 **MUSIC** Composing a Hymn: Getting Started

Ivan R. Martin

Perhaps you've been inspired to put music to a new hymn text but don't know where to begin. Join this workshop for an introduction to the process of composing hymns, including practical tips for studying the craft of hymn composition.

1.4 **STORIES** Character-Driven Writing*

Valerie Diefenbacher

Both plot-driven fiction and character-driven fiction benefit from a well-developed character arc. We will discuss methods of creating well-rounded characters and then study how to weave a strong character arc into a plot.

1.5 **STORIES** Picture Book Storyland*

Laura Rohrer Showalter

Sprinkle some spark in your story, wrap it in coziness, tumble in a puppy, grab a giggle, and land with a satisfying thump at the end. Come and share what appeals to you in a children's story. We'll discuss brainstorming ideas, navigating the maze of critique and editing, and choosing words that shine.

1.6 **WRITING** Writing as Spiritual Practice*

G. C. Waldrep

Why do we write? Where does our writing come from? For whom do we write? We'll explore three key areas of a writing practice—motivation, inspiration, and audience—that stand outside the actual act of writing but inform what we're able to accomplish when we put pen to paper, fingertips to keyboard.

2:50–3:00 **Break**

3:00–4:00 **WORKSHOP SESSION 2**

2.1 **ART** Beginner Class in Oil Painting, Part 2

Patience Boyd

Continued from Part 1.

2.2 **PHOTOGRAPHY** Understanding Your Camera

Steve Wine

Do terms like shutter speed, ISO, aperture, white balance, and focal length confuse you? Join us to discover more about these settings and how they affect your photos. Learn the difference between RAW and JPEG, rules of thumb for basic camera settings, and tips for composition.

*Workshops marked with an asterisk will be repeated.

2.3 POETRY Poetic Process

Kyle Lehman

Great poems have been written on the backs of notecards and napkins. But few of us have the practice to make such poems perfect. We will discuss the more mechanical process of poetry and methodically create our own bound poem.

2.4 STORIES Understanding “Show, Don’t Tell”*

Stephanie J. Leinbach

This common (but vague) writing advice often misguides writers. We will explore why telling is considered a villain and the sneaky ways it creeps into your writing. We will also examine the pitfalls of showing and how to truly invigorate your story.

2.5 WRITING Inspiring Children to Love Writing

Katrina Mast

Have you heard that chorus of groans when a composition assignment is announced? Have you met the stubborn writer’s block of a child who flips their pencil back and forth over an empty paper? Let’s explore ways to pass on our passion for writing to children.

2.6 WRITING Writing Like a Journalist

Chet Baumgartner

This workshop explores writing techniques and principles featured in journalism-based writing. This style emphasizes a focused, practical approach that builds text around answering the fundamental questions of who, what, when, where, why, how, and so what. It also emphasizes structures and style meant to increase a text’s impact by appealing to readers’ senses.

4:00–4:15

Break

4:15–5:15

WORKSHOP SESSION 3

3.1 ART Calligraphy and Illuminated Text

Elizabeth Hartman

Handwriting is a dying art in today’s world of emojis and abbreviations. Yet handwritten text has a power of expression that goes beyond what typed text can convey. Come journey around the world and back in time to look at different calligraphy styles and illuminated manuscripts. The class will be geared toward graphic designers as well as artists. A \$10 fee for supplies will be payable in class.

3.2 ARTICLES Why Write Essays?

James Goering

Why should you write an essay? How are they different from articles? What is an essay anyway? We will explore this less common and often misunderstood creative form to discover what makes essays unique and how they can be used to communicate universal truths through stories of human experience.

3.3 POETRY The New Song: Writing Hymn Texts for Our Generation

James Troyer

Is the song of God’s people an ancient text from centuries past, or is it the Christian’s response to God’s work today? Is it cryptic and archaic, or is it a fresh, living shout of clarity into our current surroundings? Join us as we search for the source of the New Song, and for practices that can bring it to the surface and make it break forth into sound.

3.4 STORIES Alive on the Page: Writing for Adolescents

Darletta Martin

Adolescents who love books will read almost anything. But they will best remember the stories in which real children faced real issues and had real conversations. As writers, we know it is beneficial to fictionalize our stories so we don’t offend living people. We will discuss how to create realistic characters our readers will love and remember.

3.5 STORIES That’s Funny

Josh Engbretson

What makes funny, funny? Is all humor good humor? You have a funny story. How can you capture the humor and pass on to others the delight and joy it brought you?

3.6 **WRITING** Life as a Published Writer

Katrina Hoover Lee

Impostor syndrome? Comparisonitis? Advertising angst? Trouble prioritizing? This class is for the writer who has published one or more pieces, whether article, story, or book. We'll take time for questions and discussion, along with debunking popular myths.

5:30–7:00 **Supper**

THURSDAY EVENING

7:00–7:10 **Singing**

7:10–8:00 **My Top Tip for You**

In this session, we will hear from twelve creatives who have invested in their craft. Each speaker will share a nugget of advice or a lesson they have learned.

FRIDAY MORNING

8:30–8:40 **Singing and Offering**

8:40–9:05 **Message: What If I Fail?**

Joshua Good

9:05–9:10 **Announcements**

9:15–10:15 **WORKSHOP SESSION 4**

4.1 **ART** Texture and Dimension in Pencil Sketching

Kenny Beiler

Pencil sketches are wonderful when brought to life in the right ways. This class will point out methods to help give that greater sense of life by using shading and texture. We will shade personal sketches and experiment with texturing surfaces of plants, animals, and terrain features.

4.2 **MUSIC** Writing a Good Melody for a Hymn

Ivan R. Martin

Why do some melodies work so much better than others? We will begin by evaluating the anatomy of great melodies and then explore the process of creating new melodies that will be singable, suitable, and memorable.

4.3 **PHOTOGRAPHY** Creating Compelling Photos

Steve Wine

Building on the basics from the first workshop, we will explore more advanced composition techniques. Come learn about on- and off-camera flash with live demonstrations. We will finish our time with a brief look at post-processing.

4.4 **STORIES** The Past Is a Foreign Country

Claudia Lehman

Knowing the map of a place is quite different from living there. Knowing a history textbook is different from writing stories that capture the atmosphere of another time. Let's look at the work of some writers who did it well and discuss how we can do the same.

4.5 **WRITING** Understanding Humans

Amy Engbretson

A deep and gentle knowledge of yourself and others gives your writing resonance and allows others to see themselves in your words. Learn how to grow this knowledge and explore literary examples of it.

4.6 **WRITING** Writing as Spiritual Practice*

G. C. Waldrep

A repeat of Workshop 1.6.

10:15–10:30 **Break**

10:30–11:30 **WORKSHOP SESSION 5**

5.1 **ART** **Realistic and Lively Poses for the Human Frame, Part 1** Richard Martin

In this class, we will modify stick figures into full-fledged people, learning simple dos and don'ts for realistic, lively poses. Using these modified stick figures, we will take Jack and Jill from kindergarten to ripe old age.

5.2 **ARTICLES** **How Do I Write an Essay?** James Goering

You're ready to begin writing your first essay, but you aren't sure where to get a toehold. We will discuss practical ideas on how to distill your vague idea into a solid topic, how to structure your essay, and how to develop a unique voice that engages your reader from the first line to the last.

5.3 **DESIGN** **Graphic Design: The Crash Course** D. Brandon Hartman

Design combines beauty and order in a functional way. We will transform a badly designed restaurant menu into a pleasing one that's easy to digest, contrasting the don'ts and dos of design.

5.4 **POETRY** **The New Song: The Poetry of the Hymn** James Troyer

What distinguishes hymn texts from other texts? Does a hymn text need to be a poem? If so, what kind of poem? We will discuss meaning, metaphor, and meter, about what makes lyrics singable and beautiful, about shaping God's deep truths into songs infused with clarity, wonder, and worship.

5.5 **STORIES** **To Thine Own Self Be True** Stephanie J. Leinbach

"There is no one alive who is Youer than You." And yet your story sounds like it could have been written by any Tom, Pat, or Susie. This workshop explores techniques that will help you get out of your own way and create stories only you can write.

5.6 **WRITING** **She Colored My Page Red** Sara Nolt

Ever have a document returned to you covered in red ink? I did. At first, I read the edits cautiously and then ravenously, when I realized that editors are excellent teachers. This workshop shares lessons learned from years of being edited and equips beginning writers to give and receive feedback.

11:45–1:15 **Lunch**

FRIDAY AFTERNOON

1:15–2:15 **WORKSHOP SESSION 6**

6.1 **ART** **Realistic and Lively Poses for the Human Frame, Part 2** Richard Martin

Continued from Part 1.

6.2 **ARTICLES** **Touch 50,000 Lives. Write a Just for You!** Brian Yoder

Christian writing usually aims to reach Christians. Monthly *Just for You* tracts speak to the unsaved. Could you write an article that speaks to fifty thousand people in eighteen countries? This class will discuss topic selection, article development, and audience dynamics.

6.3 **POETRY** **Call Nothing Common** Kyle Lehman

We plow the earth of our fathers and seed the soil of ancient civilizations. No man is a blank page, so never start with nothing. We will discuss how the creative process can sprout from the common, and how these things strengthen our work.

6.4 **STORIES** **Character-Driven Writing*** Valerie Diefenbacher

A repeat of Workshop 1.4.

6.5 WRITING Building Better Sentences

Lucinda J. Kinsinger

If a word is an atom, a sentence is a molecule, the smallest meaningful unit in written language. In this workshop, we will discuss types of sentences and their varying effects. Learn how to choose and manipulate words within sentences to create rhythm, build suspense, and strengthen meaning.

6.6 WRITING Life as a Beginning Writer

Katrina Hoover Lee

How can I practice? How can I conquer my fears? My work has been rejected, help! This class is for the writer who hasn't been published. We'll have time for questions, along with debunking popular beginner's myths.

2:15–2:35 **Break**

2:35–3:35 **WORKSHOP SESSION 7**

7.1 ART Panel Discussion; Q&A Elana Beery, Keith Hartman, Sarah Nolt, Naoma Lee

Listen in as artists and a designer discuss using art in the kingdom of God, finding inspiration, using relevant tools, expressing emotion, and making time for art in everyday life. Bring your thoughts and ideas!

7.2 MUSIC Finishing and Sharing Your Hymn Composition

Ivan R. Martin

Is my new hymn composition finished? Is it good enough? Will it work in congregational worship? How do I share my music and learn from feedback? This workshop will conclude with a Q&A session as time permits.

7.3 POETRY Learning From a Classic: George Herbert's "Prayer (1)" G. C. Waldrep

We're all familiar with Christian prayer. By exploring George Herbert's short poem from 1633, we will explore not only the poetic possibilities of prayer but also new ways we can invigorate and extend our own prayer-practice.

7.4 STORIES Picture Book Storyland*

Laura Rohrer Showalter

A repeat of Workshop 1.5.

7.5 STORIES Understanding "Show, Don't Tell"*

Stephanie J. Leinbach

A repeat of Workshop 2.4.

7.6 WRITING Fields and Forests: Communicating the Outdoor Experience Josh Engbretson

Being in God's creation is a special time. How do we communicate what happens in our souls out there? You've had an adventure, a deeply moving experience, a terrifying moment in the dark woods. How do you put it into words?

3:35–3:50 **Break**

3:50–4:10 **Message: What If I Succeed?**

Joshua Good

4:15 **Dismissal**

Supper (here or to-go) will be provided after dismissal.

DIRECTIONS TO HICKORY HOLLOW CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

3206 Limestone Lane, Dayton, VA 22821

Traveling on I-81

Take Exit 243; turn left onto Rt. 11. Go 0.9 miles; turn right onto Rt. 701 (Pike Church Road). Go 1.4 miles; turn left onto Rt. 701 (W. Mosby Road). Go 0.6 miles; turn left onto Rt. 42. Take next right onto Rt. 257 (Mason Street). Go 1.1 miles; turn right onto Limestone Lane. Go 0.2 miles; Hickory Hollow Christian School is on the right.

Amy Engbretson lives in northwestern Idaho with one husband, four beautiful children, and three thousand books. She writes primarily nonfiction essays, but reads everything, including people.

Brian Yoder lives in Floyd, Virginia, and enjoys his family, sheep, honeybees, orchard, and garden. He spends his time selling sheds, doing Christian Light projects, and helping run a doughnut shop. As a pastor, he enjoys finding sermon illustrations from the natural world and daily life.

Chet Baumgartner, from Bluffton, Indiana, graduated with a journalism degree and worked at three newspapers before working as a writer for Christian Light. He enjoys exploring topics—whether current events or theology—in a way that helps readers understand the possible practical kingdom implications.

Claudia Lehman lives in Paltinis, Romania, with her favorite poet, Kyle, and their three little daughters. She loves old books and trying to create new ones.

D. Brandon Hartman is a graphic designer at Christian Light who married a fellow designer, Elizabeth, in November 2023. Brandon works to create striking designs that make effective use of minimalism and contrast. He loves tactile, serviceable things like fountain pens and classic cars.

Darletta Martin has created imaginary people since preschool days. Her story characters become so real to her that she hates to forsake them, and she is delighted when readers love them as well. After teaching school for sixteen years, she married Delmer in 2012. They operate Trackside Kitchen and Book Depot in Smithsburg, Maryland.

Elizabeth Hartman is a graphic designer for Christian Light, where she met her husband, Brandon. Her time spent in the Middle East has influenced her fascination with Arabic calligraphy.

G.C. Waldrep is the author of eight collections of poetry and one book of nonfiction. He is Professor of English at Bucknell University in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, and a member of the Portico district of the Old Order River Brethren in Franklin County, Pennsylvania.

Ivan R. Martin taught music and singing in the classroom for many years and has done editorial work for various hymnal projects. Today he sets aside his bookbinding tools whenever he can to write hymn tunes and teach tune-writing workshops. Ivan lives in Pennsylvania with his wife Lucille and their four youngest children.

James Goering manages curriculum projects for Christian Light during the day and makes time to write early in the morning. You can find some of his efforts at invisiblethings.substack.com. James shares his home in Virginia with his wife and three sons.

James Troyer is married to Irene and is the father of four. A carpenter by trade, he enjoys honing wood and words into beautiful things. He has a lifetime love of poems and song lyrics and the stuff they are made of.

Josh Engbretson lives in Grangeville, Idaho, with his wife Amy and four children. He builds fences to pay their bills and writes at Borderlands: joshengbretson.com.

Joshua Good enjoys singing, preaching, relationships, and listening to choral and classical music. His greatest passion is serving the church and seeing lives transformed by the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Joshua, Kim, and their six children live near South Boston, Virginia, where he manages the Windmill Farm Bake Shop.

Katrina Hoover Lee is a childhood storyteller turned author and journalist. Author of nine inspirational books for adults, Katrina is now self-publishing a

middle-grade series. She lives with her husband and daughter in Elkhart, Indiana.

Katrina Mast has been passionate about sharing her love of writing since she finished school. From siblings to missionary children to homeschoolers and finally to her current lively fourth graders, she loves exploring words with children.

Kenny Beiler lives in Aroda, Virginia, and is enjoying the adventure of married life since his wedding in 2024. He works in construction, where he tries not to get his fingers smashed by heavy boards in the process of building houses. He has always had an affinity for drawings of a more fantastical nature.

Kyle Lehman lives with his wife Claudia and their three daughters in Paltinis, Romania. He is a teacher, gardener, and lover of the old paths. He enjoys working with wood, metal, stone, and even words to create poetry anywhere.

Laura R. Showalter is fascinated by the bottomless well of only twenty-six letters. She delights in eloquent books, quotable quotes, and both the crisp precision and fluid ambiguity of words. Laura and her husband Jeremy live in Virginia, surrounded by mountains, children, and the beautiful ordinary.

Lucinda J. Kinsinger lives in Oakland, Maryland, with her husband Ivan and toddlers Annalise and Teddy. She is the author of two memoirs: *Anything But Simple* and *Turtle Heart*, and two children's books: *The Arrowhead* and *Rosanna in the Middle*. She blogs at lucindajkinsinger.com.

Patience Boyd has painted watercolor since childhood and has been painting with oil in recent years. She illustrated the first volume of *Tell Me the Stories of God and His People* and is working on Volume 2. She works from her home in Pennsylvania where she spends her free time studying Biblical languages.

Richard Martin lives in northwestern Pennsylvania with his wife Rhonda and five children. He spends half his time drawing and painting and the other half installing garage doors.

Sara Nolt lives in Ephrata, Pennsylvania, with her husband John and their four extraordinary children. Homeschooling, motherhood, and written words fill her days while God and His eternal purposes fill her heart.

Stephanie J. Leinbach, wife of Linford, mother of four, lives in the mountains of central Pennsylvania. She collects books, ideas, and historic houses and hopes to see the day when every committed writer has enough knowledge and support to create transformative, compelling stories.

Steve Wine is in his third year as a photographer at Rosewood Marketing, following several years of hobby photography. When not at work, you may find him driving a tow truck, spending time with his wife, or doing an occasional family photo shoot.

Valerie Diefenbacher spends her days writing, dog training, hosting, housekeeping, and refining the art of coffee and conversation. She has been a dairy farmer's wife, homeschool mom, missionary, and teacher. Valerie and her husband Steve live in Ontario with two of their four fascinating children.

Registration Required

Use the accompanying registration form or register online: christianlight.org/wac

