

Tapestry – Writing Tips and Guidelines

Tapestry is an official publication of Lutheran Women's Missionary League–Canada. Women of Lutheran Church–Canada, particularly those who are members of LWML–Canada societies, but also other women of the Church, are its primary audience.

Articles in *Tapestry* should inspire, inform and encourage readers in their faith. Personal faith articles and features about people active in the church and/or LWML–Canada are always welcome. Bible studies on the theme of an issue are welcome provided they are submitted well in advance.

The theme for each issue is established by the editorial staff. A listing of themes and deadlines for submission of material is available at www.lutheranwomen.ca/publications-and-forms/tapestry. Copies are also available from members of the editorial staff. Before developing a final manuscript, you are encouraged to submit a sample of your work and an outline of the article you wish to write to the editor-in-chief.

Some writers may quickly dash off a story or an article when a theme appeals and, after a quick re-read, perhaps a minor correction or two, speed it on its way to the editors of *Tapestry*. While we're glad to receive these stories, it would save everyone's time and much back and forth communication if some additional work were done before submitting the article or story.

Usually the first effort at putting our writing on paper is, like a couch potato, a little flabby with more words than are needed to tell the story. There are many good books available to help with writing skills. (See the list of helps under Manuscripts.)

Regardless of how much value a story has to the writer, if the reader does not find, by the end of the first paragraph or two, that it has value for them they will skip on to something else. "What will the reader take away?" is an important question. Wm. Brohaugh, in "Write Tight," points

out: There "are stories of monumental importance to their authors, but of little importance to anyone else." It does not mean that what is written should be discarded. Rather, re-focus with the reader firmly in mind. What does she want to hear/know about this, rather than what do I want to say about it.

As writers, we may, without realizing it, assume that those who will read our efforts are just like us. Not true. We do not know who might happen to pick up a copy of *Tapestry* or to whom a subscriber might give a copy saying, "I think you would enjoy this...." This reason alone, says we must take care when we write; our writing is not just the sharing of a personal story, it is a modeling of what it means to live as a Christian. It needs to point clearly to our need of a Saviour and that Jesus came to fill that need.

Fact Checking

While the need to check facts is obvious in a news story, it is just as necessary in other writing. No guessing allowed; and don't rely on a sometimes-faulty memory. If something is mentioned as fact, check it with a reliable source. In a Christian magazine there are other sorts of fact checking that are also crucial.

- Scripture: If you quote, don't rely on memory. Copy correctly, including punctuation. The only change we make is capitalizing any personal pronouns referring to the Triune God to fit the style used in *Tapestry*. Provide the name of the version and be sure the reference (book, chapter, verse) is correct. If referring to scripture rather than quoting (e.g. "In Romans chapter 12 it points out...") check carefully so that what you say it says is really what is being said...and

meant. Even if you are only indirectly referring to something from scripture take care that the words you choose both mean what is intended by scripture and cannot be misconstrued by a reader with a different background.

- Law/Gospel; justification/sanctification: Another area where we can get our scriptural facts tangled up is Law and Gospel. How easily we humans can turn one into the other simply by careless wording. Justification speaks of how God has made a relationship with a sinful, condemned people through Jesus Christ. How easily we give ourselves a role in our salvation with our choice of words...usually unintentionally. Sanctification speaks of our relationship, as redeemed children of God, with others. Having Luther's Small Catechism, as well as your Bible, close at hand can help with this. If you do not have a copy of the catechism you may find one at <https://www.lcms.org/graphics/assets/media/LCMS/smallcatechism.pdf>.

Our readers expect and deserve this sort of accuracy.

Specifications

Manuscripts

Feature articles should be approximately 500-1500 words. Typing is preferred, but readable printing or handwriting is acceptable. Include name, address, phone number and e-mail address and a short biographical sketch. Manuscripts may be sent by mail or e-mail to the Editor-in-Chief (see pg 2). *Tapestry* uses *The Canadian Style* published by The Department of the

Secretary of State of Canada as our basic style guide. In addition, we also use *Editing Canadian English, 2nd Edition* published by Macfarlane Walter & Ross for the Editors' Association of Canada as well as *Gage Canadian Paperback Dictionary* for Canadian spellings.

Illustrations

Original drawings, charts, cartoons, and the like are welcome. If prepared for use with a specific article or theme, please indicate. Include name, address, telephone number with the illustration.

Illustrations may be submitted in digital format at a resolution of at least 200 dpi.

Photographs

Please provide clear, vibrant shots, preferably of people in action. Avoid photos of people spread out over a large area. Include information for captions and the name of the photographer for proper credit.

Do not write on the back of a processed photograph, particularly with ink or a sharp pencil. Identify it with a stick-on label and appropriate information on a separate page. As a rule, photographs will not be returned.

Digital photographs should be taken at the largest size. Please send digital photographs in their original size and format. Photographs printed on a home printer and scanned to give a digital file are usually of very poor quality.

Photographs (and stories) published in local newspapers may be submitted but a digital copy of the photograph and permission from the newspaper must accompany the submission.

Copyright policy

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A sample article from each issue is published online.

Copyright regarding quotations

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arrives, attach a copy of the request to the manuscript. In the case of written material, if an address for the copyright holder cannot be found, it may be advantageous to paraphrase rather than quote—still giving credit for the thought to the original author.

Editing policy

Tapestry will edit to eliminate instances of bias which would cause hurt, misunderstanding or division among those for whom Christ died. The Editorial Staff reserves the right to make corrections, additions and deletions in all material submitted, but will be discreet. The editor-in-chief will advise on major alterations prior to publication whenever possible.

All submitted material is subject to doctrinal review according to the Constitution of Lutheran Church–Canada.

Subscription rates

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Editor-in-Chief

Marion Hollinger, Editor-in-Chief
223 – 250 Hunter Road, Saskatoon, SK S7T 0Y4
(306) 343-7396
tapestry@lutheranwomen.ca