

Patricia Paddey  
& Karen Stiller



How to Build a Life as a Christian Writer

Introduction Pack for  
*Craft, Cost & Call:*  
*How to Build a Life as a Christian Writer*

# *Craft, Cost & Call:* *How to Build a Life as a Christian Writer*

Inspiring and immensely readable, *Craft, Cost & Call* offers help for people of faith who want to write well and be published. For writers hoping to launch a career or simply yearning to grow in their craft, this guidebook provides a clear path forward, filled with the hard-won wisdom of long-time and widely-published Christian writers.

From the beauty of the call to write and all it entails, to the secrets of excellent writing and clear direction on how to be published, the authors take their readers on a journey both practical and personal. “Try this” challenges will move any aspiring writer off their couch and into their writing chair. Far from a manual, this offering reads as a heartfelt conversation between writers—guiding, encouraging, and cheering others on to success.

## A Unique Guidebook for Christian Writers

- Explore the call of a Christian writer
- Learn how to interview sources
- Write great openings and endings
- Understand how to edit your own work
- What is voice?
- Consider the power of personal essays
- “Try This” challenges move writers forward in craft and career
- Plus much more in this heartfelt conversation between writers—guiding, encouraging, and cheering each other on to success.

## *What Others are Saying About the Book*

“Written with generosity and contagious zest, this book combines inspiration, information, and reflection on the writing life by two Canadian writers who have established careers as standard-bearers for excellence in Christian writing. Their honest sharing will encourage and enable writers who are aspiring or just plain weary to press on with diligence, discipline, and so experience the joy of the gift of words.”

– Maxine Hancock, Author of *Gold from the Fire: Postcards from a Prairie Pilgrimage*, Professor Emerita, Interdisciplinary Studies and Spiritual Theology, Regent College.

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“This book—it’s like I found a bundle of money in a paper bag under a park bench. I’m leaping for joy and feeling a tad guilty all at once. I have been writing for print for a goodly while, and every word of this little masterpiece has me either nodding, sagely, my approval or wincing, ashamedly, at things I once knew and then forgot, or maybe never knew at all. Karen Stiller and Patricia Paddey stuff these few pages with so much wit, wisdom, clear prose, and hard-earned counsel that no writer—no matter how green or seasoned—will fail to benefit from it. Take the money and run.”

– Mark Buchanan, Author of *God Speed: Walking as Spiritual Practice*, Associate Professor of Pastoral Theology at Ambrose University.

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“Finally, writers of faith have a relevant, tactful, and informative survival guide in *Craft, Cost & Call*. Together, Patricia Paddey and Karen Stiller offer a wealth of shared experience in creating a meaningful writing life while navigating distractions, financial realities, and performance pressures in a newly changing publication landscape.”

– Carolyn A. Weber, Author of *Surprised by Oxford*, Associate Professor of Literature, Heritage College & Seminary, and Brescia University College.

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“*Craft, Cost & Call* is a concise, easy-to-read introduction to nonfiction writing for people considering it as a career, although it would also be a great gift for someone who thinks of it as a hobby. The authors share their Christian perspectives and career experiences with diverse genres of writing in a frank, friendly, and affirming way. There’s lots of great, practical advice, either drawing on personal (and embarrassing) anecdotes or memorable quotes from accomplished mainstream writers. Writers can never afford to stop learning, and this book will help many along that journey.”

– Bill Fledderus, Senior Editor, Faith Today magazine, and Adjunct Lecturer/Journalism Instructor, Redeemer University College.

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“I’ve worked with both Patricia Paddey and Karen Stiller over several years, and I’ve gotten to know their work. Both of them are excellent writers, and I turn to them frequently when I need something written on a tight deadline for my unique audience. I’m grateful to know them as colleagues in the world of writing. I’m grateful to Paddey and Stiller for this book, which is chock-full of help for writers of all kinds. I love the earthy wisdom and encouraging (and sometimes sobering) anecdotes of success and failure. This is not a book designed to sell you anything. Rather, read it, savor it, and decide what applies to your circumstances. You’ll probably find, as I did, that you keep mulling it over long after you put it down.”

– Jay Blossom, Publisher, In Trust magazine, In Trust Center for Theological Schools.

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“In *Craft, Cost & Call*, Stiller and Paddey offer a feast of writing advice as delicious as it is nourishing. Practical, wise, and enormously helpful, this book manifests the beautiful writing it aims to inspire (and offers a few belly laughs to boot). I finished the book longing to be a better writer, and newly equipped to move in that direction. I’ll be ordering copies for all my writer friends.”

– Carolyn Arends, Recording Artist and Renovaré Director of Education.

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“The book feels very much like a conversation, candidly sharing experience and advice. Beginning and intermediate writers will gain the most, but even seasoned pros may pick up a thing or two. The ‘craft’ section deals mainly with nonfiction, mostly articles, yet I’ve gleaned inspiration and encouragement I can apply to my fiction. The ‘cost’ section includes practical business tips relevant to all, and ‘call’ addresses the spiritual side of writing. What struck me most in that part was this quote: ‘View your platform as the place from which you live out your calling to be a writer and to serve your readers.’

Reading this book made me want to go write something. Writers are invited to visit [CraftCostCall.com](http://CraftCostCall.com) for ‘more writing exercises, resources, and conversation about building a life as a Christian writer.’

This virtual watercooler could become a very good place to hang out. Patricia Paddey and Karen Stiller have solid backgrounds in writing and editing, with articles and books and awards to their names. These two authors illustrate the truth that while writing is often a solitary activity, it requires community. Having benefited from other writers along the way, they’ve prepared this book to mentor others. And they’re donating a portion of proceeds from *Craft, Cost & Call* to The Word Guild, an association of writers and editors who are Christian.”

– Janet Sketchley, writer and reader (Amazon.ca)

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“With *Craft, Cost & Call* Patricia Paddey and Karen Stiller have given generations of writers the tools they need to fulfill their call as writers who are Christian, This is a book that should take its place alongside Strunk & White’s *Elements of Style* and William Zissner’s *On Writing Well* on the reference shelf of any Christian writer.”

– Robert White, writer and editor (Amazon.ca)

## *Author Bios*

Patricia Paddey is a freelance writer, editor, and communications consultant. Her writing has appeared in magazines and journals across North America and won numerous awards. She is a senior writer for Faith Today magazine. She co-authored *Shifting Stats Shaking the Church: 40 Canadian Churches Respond* (2015), *The Game Changers: True Stories About Saving Mothers & Babies in East Africa* (2016), and contributed to *Reflections for Advent* (published by World Vision Canada, 2016). Most recently, she co-wrote *Circle of Opportunity: Stories of Lives Changed Through Opportunity International Canada* (2019). With a background in broadcast journalism, she has written and produced segments and programs for both mainstream and faith-based Canadian television programs. She currently works part-time as Director of Communications at Wycliffe College at the University of Toronto. Patricia lives in Mississauga, Ontario. With an undergraduate degree in Radio and Television Arts from Ryerson University, she recently completed a Master of Theological Studies at McMaster Divinity College. She blogs at [www.patriciapaddey.com](http://www.patriciapaddey.com)

**Karen Stiller** is senior editor of Faith Today magazine, and a freelance writer and editor. Her work has appeared in magazines and journals across North America. She has written stories from refugee camps in South Sudan and Uganda, from Senegal about community improvement projects, from Cambodia, and across North America. Stiller is a recipient of the A.C. Forrest Memorial Award from the Canadian Church Press for excellence in socially conscious religious journalism, and the The Debra Fieguth Social Justice Award for writers, among other writing awards. She is co-author of two books about the Church: *Shifting Stats Shaking the Church: 40 Canadian Churches Respond* (2015), *Going Missional* (2012); and editor of *Evangelicals Around the World: a global handbook for the 20th century* (Thomas Nelson, 2015), and *The Lord's Prayer* (Wipf & Stock, 2015), by faculty at the University of Toronto (Wycliffe College). Stiller has a Master of Fine Arts in Creative Non-Fiction from University of King's College, and her spiritual memoir, *The Minister's Wife* will be published by Chicago-based Tyndale House Publishers in the Spring of 2020. [www.karenstiller.com](http://www.karenstiller.com)

## *Craft, Cost & Call Writer Workshops*

At the heart of *Craft, Cost & Call* is our desire to help other writers grow in their craft and understand their call. We want to help Christian writers be better than they are. We have designed several workshops that we can offer to writer's groups or writing classes, either in person or virtually through skype, zoom or some other platform. **We can also custom-design a workshop for the needs of a specific group.**

Here are a few examples of workshops we have done:

### **The Call of the Christian Writer**

What does it mean to be "called to write?" What role do writers play in the Church and in the sharing of the good news of the gospel in today's Canada and the world? This workshop will explore those questions and more, as we consider the calling of today's spiritual writer. We will also present and explore together ways to stay spiritually healthy as a writer as we write our way into a rapidly changing culture both within and outside of the Church.

### **Hands on with an article autopsy**

It sounds messy, but it's fun. In this completely interactive, sleeves rolled up workshop, we will dissect some really great articles and find out what makes them work. Writing is a craft that can be improved by looking thoughtfully and actively at the work of others. In this guided, practical session we will examine the techniques of other writers and see what tips and ideas we can glean and apply to our own work. Bring your highlighters!

### **How to get started as a writer**

The beginning of the writing journey can feel overwhelming. How do I get published? Can I get published? And why would anyone want to hear from me? This workshop will help you identify your own writing goals and gifts, and create a solid, practical and achievable plan for moving forward. We will learn from the wisdom of each other in this interactive session and leave with a 'to-do' list tailor-made for our own writing goals.

### **How to write spiritual memoir**

We will explore what spiritual memoir is, and the increasingly significant role it plays in spiritual writing. We will consider what makes a story or experience from our own lives speak to others, and what doesn't. What is too personal to share? What if I hurt people's feelings? How do I write the truth, without over-sharing? And...who really cares about *my* experiences and spiritual life? We consider those questions and more in this workshop.

*The details about  
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How to Build a Life as a Christian Writer*

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