

## 2019 Kentucky Christian Writers Conference Faculty

**Wanda Barbella** followed her passion, after many years in the corporate world, and obtained her Master's Degree in Christian Counseling in 2000. She continued her education and has since received several other credentials—thus all of those initials after her name. In her private practice she works with individuals and families with addictions and eating disorders, trauma and grief, and a variety of emotional and relationship issues.

Wanda is proud of her Christian heritage—the granddaughter of two Methodist ministers. She resides in South Florida with her handicapped cat and enjoys all the beautiful things living in South Florida has to offer, including reading on her Kindle while enjoying her lakefront back deck. She is excited to help authors follow their passion and get their message out into the world that she sees first hand needing the touch of God.

Wanda represents [EA Books Publishing](#), which provides a fairly new model combining the positives from the pay-to-publish approach, such as greater author control, keeping 100% of your profits, and shorter production time, along with the expertise of seasoned professionals to guide you through the publishing process. If you want to pitch to Wanda, she would like to see a one-sheet on your project.

**Jenny Baumgartner** is editorial director and acquisitions editor for Nelson Books, a division of HarperCollins Christian Publishing. She has been in Christian publishing since 1998 when she joined Thomas Nelson's gift book division. Since then, she has edited both nonfiction and fiction, partnering with many award-winning and New York Times bestselling authors. She holds a master's in English, completed her coursework for a doctorate in English, and has taught a good bit of college English. She spends her free time consuming copious amounts of coffee and being a slightly insane mother to twins.

Jenny acquires all types of nonfiction, including Christian living, spiritual growth, motivational, psychology, memoir, business/finance/leadership, and more. She would prefer attendees to bring a short proposal or a one-sheet. Visit her website at:

<https://writingforyourlife.com/jenny-baumgartner/>

**Nicki Bishop:** I'm a Kentucky mama of four who loves art, music and is hopelessly addicted to the written word. As a child, my idea of "playing outside" was finding the perfect tree to sit in and read. Now that I'm a mama of four beautiful, book-loving kids, it makes me happy to watch them discover the wardrobe to Narnia, the little cabin in the Big Woods of Wisconsin and the sound Cam Jansen makes when she remembers something. These are the moments I treasure sharing with my own kids, and they are part of the reason I became a writer.

When I'm not at home—doing life with my kids or watching Netflix with my bearded, barber hubby—I can usually be found teaching art to K5-12th grade, playing violin for church or tackling the latest editing project for work.

I am very privileged to work with some excellent people in my positions as editor and online content creator for Heart to Heart Publishing, Historian for the Kentucky Christian Writers' Conference and member of American Christian Fiction Writers. One of the best learning opportunities for me as a writer was judging the 2016 & 2017 ACFW Genesis Contest.

Another great experience was entering the 2015 Promising Beginnings Contest where I placed as a finalist for my entry, *Oceans Rise*.

Read Nicki's blog at: <https://wheregracefoundme.wordpress.com/> and more about her at <https://quillsandinkblotts.wordpress.com/nicki-bishop/>

**Gregg Bridgemann** began operating Olivia Kimbrell Press in 2011 acting as Editor-in-Chief. Then as now, he operates the press as a ministry. The primary objective remains that of lifting up and helping ministry-minded Biblical authors fulfill the Great Commission—to bring the Gospel message to the entire world—for every tribe and nation. Gregg currently serves in the National Guard, is a decorated combat veteran, and is best known for his technical savvy and attention to the smallest detail.

Olivia Kimbrell Press only accepts full manuscripts. Attendees may bring a synopsis and the first three chapters, but the manuscript must be completed to be considered. Visit the OKP website at: <http://www.oliviakimbrellpress.com/>

**Hallee Bridgemann** With more than half a million book sales, Hallee Bridgeman is a best-selling Christian author who writes action-packed romantic suspense focusing on realistic characters who face real-world problems. Her work has been described as everything from refreshing to heart-stopping exciting and edgy.

An Army brat turned Floridian, Hallee finally settled in central Kentucky with her family so that she could enjoy the beautiful changing of the seasons. She enjoys the roller-coaster ride thrills that life with a National Guard husband, a college student daughter, and two pre-teen sons delivers.

A prolific writer, when she's not penning novels, you will find her in the kitchen, which she considers the 'heart of the home'. Her passion for cooking spurred her to launch a whole food, real food "Parody" cookbook series. In addition to nutritious, Biblically grounded recipes, readers will find that each cookbook also confronts some controversial aspect of secular pop culture.

Hallee is a member of the Published Author Network (PAN) of the Romance Writers of America (RWA) where she serves as a long time member in the Faith, Hope, & Love chapter. She is a member of the American Christian Fiction Writers (ACFW) and the American Christian Writers (ACW) as well as being a member of Novelists, Inc. (NINC). An accomplished speaker, Hallee has taught and inspired writers around the globe, from Sydney, Australia, to Dallas, Texas, to Portland, Oregon, to Washington, D.C., and all places in between.

Hallee loves coffee, campy action movies, and regular date nights with her husband. Above all else, she loves God with all of her heart, soul, mind, and strength; has been redeemed by the blood of Christ; and relies on the presence of the Holy Spirit to guide her. She prays her work here on earth is a blessing to you and would love to hear from you. You can reach Hallee at [hallee@halleebridgeman.com](mailto:hallee@halleebridgeman.com). Visit Hallee's website at: <http://www.halleebridgeman.com/>

**Crystal Caudill** is a tea-drinking, book-hoarding, history nerd. Her parents had no idea what a monster they were creating when they took her to her first history museum. From that moment on she has researched and crafted stories filled with danger, love, and history.

She is a member of ACFW and Novel.Academy. She won the 2018 RWA Wisconsin Fab Five, came in second for the 2018 RWA Touched By Love Contest, and was a finalist in the

2017 ACFW Virginia Crown Award. She has received her Master's Degree in Elementary Education and is a substitute teacher for her local school district.

While yet unpublished fictionally, she does have an article published on the Southern Writer's Magazine Blog titled *Crafting the Perfect Chapter* and a guest post on Quills and Inkblots on *2 Fantastic Writing Resources*.

Visit Crystal's website at: <https://crystalcaudillwrites.com/>

**Michele Chynoweth** is the best-selling and award-winning author of *The Faithful One*, *The Peace Maker* and *The Runaway Prophet*, contemporary suspense/romance novels that re-imagine Old Testament stories in the Bible. Michele is also an inspirational speaker who has addressed a variety of writers' conferences and other organizations across the country, a book coach and a writing instructor for the Continuing Education program at Cecil College in North East, MD. A graduate of the University of Notre Dame, she and her husband have a blended family of five children. Visit Michele's website: <https://www.michelechynoweth.com/>

**Hannah Conway** is a military wife, mother of two, middle school teacher, best-selling author, and popular speaker. Her novels are a deployment experience of their own, threaded with faith, and filled with twists and turns. Hannah is a member of the American Christian Fiction Writers, and *My Book Therapy*. She and her family live in Tennessee. Visit Hannah's website: <https://hannahconway.com/>

**Kathy Cretsinger** is owner of Mantle Rock Publishing LLC. Mantle Rock Publishing LLC is a small Christian publisher. Mantle Rock is looking for Christian Romance, Christian Romantic Suspense, Christian Historical Romance, and Christian Mystery/Suspense with around 80,000 to 90,000 words of the completed manuscript. No novellas. Kathy requires a one-sheet with three pages of the first chapter at a conference.

She and her husband, Jerry, live in Kentucky. They have two grown children and four grandchildren. Their time is spent in the fall between football games, where two grandsons play. One granddaughter plays in the high school band, and the other granddaughter recently graduated college with a music degree. Kathy also speaks about writing at writer's conferences.

Kathy and Mantle Rock Publishing LLC are devoted to help the author find their way in the marketing industry. Kathy is also an author writing under the name of Katt Anderson. Her latest book, *Smoky Mountain Brides*, released October 17, 2017. Another book will be out in June 2019, *Nothin' Shady Ever Happens in Shady Valley*. Visit Mantle Rock's website at: <http://mantlerockpublishingllc.com>.

**Tracy Crump** has published two dozen stories in anthologies, including nineteen in *Chicken Soup for the Soul*. As co-director of Write Life Workshops, she conducts workshops and webinars on writing for the series, and her "How to Write for Chicken Soup for the Soul" course is one of Serious Writer Academy's top sellers. Her articles and devotionals have appeared in national publications, and she edits *The Write Life*, a popular writers newsletter that includes story callouts. She is a freelance editor and proofreader for *Farmer's Almanac*. Visit Tracy at [www.TracyCrump.com](http://www.TracyCrump.com) or [www.WriteLifeWorkshops.com](http://www.WriteLifeWorkshops.com).

**Rhonda Dragomir** and her family live in Kentucky horse country, in the idyllic small town of Wilmore. A graduate of Asbury University with a degree in Social Work, she is a

committed pastor's wife and Bible teacher. Rhonda is also an award-winning writer, with published works in Chicken Soup for the Soul anthologies and Spark magazine. She also wrote an opinion column in her local newspaper for four years, in which some views garnered national attention.

Rhonda and her husband formed The Dragomir Group ([www.dragomirgroup.com](http://www.dragomirgroup.com)) to offer website design, typesetting, and media services to writers. Contact Rhonda at: [rhonda@dragomirgroup.com](mailto:rhonda@dragomirgroup.com).

**Rachelle Gardner** is an agent with Books & Such Literary Management, representing both fiction and nonfiction. In the publishing business since 1995, Rachelle previously worked for two publishing houses in sales, marketing, and editorial. She's been an agent for 12 years and currently represents an impressive list of 75 bestselling and award-winning authors, in addition to coaching un-agented authors and teaching at conferences and in her online course, AuthorSchool.com. Read Rachelle's blog and see the authors she represents at <https://rachellegardner.com>.

Rachelle is looking for mainstream commercial projects for both the Christian and general markets. Her fiction interests are upmarket/book club fiction, romance, and suspense/thriller. Her non-fiction interests are spread across multiple genres including race and social justice; progressive Christianity; business/career; family; and practical self-improvement. Debut fiction authors must have a complete manuscript to be considered. Non-fiction authors should be working on a book proposal. Rachelle likes to look at a few pages of your manuscript and/or proposal during a meeting, and a one-sheet if you have one. She appreciates authors who have a good understanding of platform and social media, and expects non-fiction authors to have established a following.

**Jean Matthew Hall** lives in Louisville, Kentucky. Her premier picture book, It's Spring! is due to be released by Little Lamb Books in early 2019, to be followed by three more books in this Four Seasons series.

When not enjoying time with family and church Jean is immersed in children's picture books—reading them, reviewing them, writing them!

Jean is a member of the SCBWI, Word Weavers International, and the Kentucky Christian Writers. You can visit Jean at [www.jeanmatthewhall.com](http://www.jeanmatthewhall.com), on Facebook at Jean Matthew Hall Author, on Twitter at Jean\_Hall. Pop in to her Pinterest Board for Writers at JeanMatthew\_Hall.

**Carlton Hughes** is a professor of communication at Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College, children's pastor at Lynch Church of God, freelance writer, husband to Kathy, and father to Noah and Ethan. He enjoys long walks on the beach (He really does!), photography, and classic sitcoms like "I Love Lucy." Hughes has been published in Chicken Soup for the Soul, Simple Little Words, and several devotional books from Worthy Publishing-- The Wonders of Nature, Just Breathe, So God Made a Dog, Let the Earth Rejoice, and the forthcoming Everyday Grace for Men. He is on the planning committee and serves as a faculty member for Kentucky Christian Writers Conference. Hughes is a true blue fan of Kentucky Wildcats Basketball and loves to cook and bake, especially anything involving chocolate.

**Kristy Horine** is a Kentucky writer: a freelance journalist by trade; a creative by God's grace. She writes a little bit of everything including poetry, fiction and creative non-fiction. Her professional and creative work has been published in newspapers, magazines and anthologies in Kentucky and beyond.

In 2015, she founded 3rd Letter Christian Writers in Lexington, Kentucky. She has served as Publicity Chair for the Kentucky Christian Writers Conference since 2016, is the Communications Coordinator for the Women's Ministry at her church, and has been a member of the American Christian Fiction Writers since 2018. Visit Kristy's website: <https://kristyhorine.com/>

**Nicole Jones** spent the last year working as an intern for The Seymour Agency. She is a student in Belmont University's Publishing Program and will be interning with HarperCollins Christian Publishing this summer. Nicole will be representing The Seymour Agency and taking pitches for all genres of fiction and nonfiction. Attendees should bring a one sheet and sample chapter to meetings. Learn more about submissions to The Seymour Agency at: <https://www.theseymouragency.com/Submissions.html>

**Amanda Leudeke** was a 2006 graduate of the acclaimed Professional Writing program at Taylor University, and she brings a background in marketing and advertising to her agent role. Over the years, she has kept one foot in the marketing world, working with brands such as Vera Bradley, Peg Perego, Tecomet, Do It Best, Minwax, Pratt & Lambert, HGTV Home by Sherwin-Williams, and more.

She met Chip MacGregor at an author signing in a Barnes and Noble in 2008. After realizing they had a commonality in Taylor University, one thing led to another, and before she knew it, she was helping him with projects, research, and all the little stuff she now assumes he just didn't feel like doing.

Promoted to the role of agent in 2010 and then vice president in 2018, Amanda is currently focusing on nonfiction and Christian spirituality projects with a sprinkling of fiction.

She released her author marketing book *The Extroverted Writer: An Author's Guide to Marketing and Building a Platform* in 2013.

Though she considers the Chicagoland area to be home, she currently lives in Fort Wayne, Indiana, with her husband, son, and two dogs.

Amanda is looking for nonfiction from authors who have some kind of platform. Attendees don't need to bring anything to the meeting. Visit Amanda's agent page at: <http://www.macgregorandluedeke.com/about/agents/amanda-luedeke/>.

**Kenzi Nevins** is an award-winning writer and literary agent with a passion for magic realism and mythology. A graduate of Taylor University's professional writing and theatre programs, she joined Cyle Young Literary Elite in 2018 as an agent representing illustrators and author/illustrators. She has been awarded second place for theatre journalism and critique from the Kennedy Center for American College Theatre, and her short story, "The Last Freedom," was published in eBook and paperback by StoryShares in 2017. When she isn't writing, Kenzi can be found watering her fairy garden, experimenting with little-known tea flavors, or wandering the aisles of her small-town Kentucky library. You can connect with her on Facebook (Kenzi Melody Author) and through her blog, [www.kenzimelody.com](http://www.kenzimelody.com). If you would like to pitch to Kenzi, she would like to see a one-sheet and 2-4 completed illustration samples.

**Charis Rooks** is a wife, mother, grandmother, author, Celebrate Recovery Pastor, motivational speaker, founder of Divorce Recovery Advocates for Women INC, CEO/Editor in Chief of Inspired Grace Media Productions LLC, certified women's leadership coach, and contributing author for the Divorce Magazine in London, UK.

Website: <https://draw4women.com/>

Author/Book Prayer Station: Schedule a time and come to the prayer station where we can pray over your work, your authorship, or your personal life. Share this time with me, Charis Rooks, to pray for your writing ministry, your journey as a writer, or your work itself so that you can further your writing journey through the power of prayer and self-reflection.

**Gene Rowley** If you've ever watched television or visited a movie theater, you've heard Gene Rowley's voice. Gene spent his early life traveling around the world with his father which exposed him to hundreds of diverse cultures and languages. He is a nationally recognized voice actor, two-time nominee for Voice Arts Awards, Audiobook Narration of the Year, Award-winning radio host, and playwright. Husband of 25 years and father of three daughters, Gene operates an innovative non-profit radio station near Birmingham Alabama. He is a U.S. Army combat veteran and former UAV pilot. He donates a majority of his time and talent to ministries and charities believing, "The Lord made me to sound like this. The best way to use my voice is to lift in in praise to Him." Visit Gene's website: [www.generowley.com](http://www.generowley.com). Note: Gene's website will not work without Flash Player.

**Lydia Walker** is a singer/songwriter and worship leader from Middle Tennessee. She is the host of the Rustic Songbird Podcast that features interviews with songwriters about their craft and process. She is passionate about music and motherhood. Her latest CDs are original *Lullabies*, and a collection of songs for moms called *Made for This*. Website: [www.rusticsongbird.com](http://www.rusticsongbird.com). You may contact Lydia at: [lydiawalkermusic@gmail.com](mailto:lydiawalkermusic@gmail.com).

**Sharon Wilharm** (intro to her blog) In 2013 my husband Fred and I attended the National Religious Broadcasters conference. We went as media working for a popular online magazine. We watched as all the media outlets focused on the big-budget, wide-release movies and their filmmakers and actors, completely unaware of smaller films and the individuals who made them. I came home and immediately created Faith Flix as a way to spotlight those in the faith-based film industry who were being overlooked by the rest of the media. I had no idea what a nerve I would hit.

I've been blessed to have Faith Flix explode beyond my wildest expectations. While I've certainly interviewed plenty of unknown individuals and featured overlooked films, Faith Flix became so much more. It expanded into a hub for upcoming releases, celebrity and author interviews, book, music, and movie reviews, and coverage of writing and film events. What wonderful friends I've met in the entertainment industry and what an honor it has been to help my fellow creatives share the word about their passion projects.

My goal for the blog has been to help promote Christians who are doing great work and to inspire others by sharing their stories. I trust that you'll take a moment and browse all the wonderful interviews with ordinary people doing extraordinary things. You might want to go grab a cup of hot cocoa and curl up in front of a fire, because with six years of articles, you may find yourself reading for quite a spell. Visit Sharon's website: <https://sharonwilharm.com/>

