

JUST A WORD!

Just a word about JUST WRITE. A small group has met monthly since June 2024, usually in the church or common room, and occasionally in someone's home.

At first, we called ourselves WRITE & READ, indicating exactly that: one person may read to us whatever they have written, while someone else may choose to read another's words. However, so many church members referred to it as READ & WRITE that it began to sound like a school lesson! So I suggested a change of title, and now, 'JUST WRITE' sounds exclusive to writers. It isn't meant to be!

I would like to explain that this circle is not closed – those who don't feel they are writers are welcomed, because interested listeners bring objectivity as we comment, following a piece. None of us knows what anyone will bring to the group. Like our conversation after Sunday's 'thought for the day', on-the-spot observations mingle with poignant associations. No-one is obliged to read or to comment, while all comments are supportive and not critical.

Our circle has always been small, which is strange, because most humans use words all the time, pondering matters great and small. We speak to others (or to ourselves – I certainly do). We write in diaries, write emails to friends, and at work we create articles. Generally, we reflect about everything around us and within. So, we just need to sit with laptop open – of course, it may even be pen and a notepad.

My own writing began with youthful poems and one or two short stories prompted by my favourite English teacher. As an adult, it was about writing articles, developing musical plays for the local school, then later (at what is now Anglia Ruskin) I supported students' assignments. During ministry in Lancashire and in York, it was about creating talks for Sunday services. While living in New Zealand but while anticipating my return to England, memories of my youthful rambles prompted a whole suite of reflective pieces to surface. In 2021, I moved to fiction-writing, and now it's back to short memoir pieces! How about you?

We have established a supportive, confidential and quietly liberating circle. We are growing together. May Autumn bring us into a warm and creative gathering of writers and readers. (Personally, I think that would be *just right*!)

From Marianna Michell

OUR NEXT GATHERING IS ON FRIDAY 25th @ 2.15 for 2.30, IN THE CHURCH.

Please contact Marianna on ringofvoices@gmail.com, for confirmation of venue.