Writing Workshop

*What Are You Called to Write?*

Introduction

The Hope for this time together is that it is a retreat, a Sabbath time. This is time set apart for you to focus on your own passion for writing and sharing the Good News.

Practically, we want to provide you with skills that will improve your writing and that you will be able to share with your students, colleagues and church leaders at home.

But beyond that, we want to feed your Passion. We want you to remember the passion that called you into ministry, the passion you have for writing.

We want you to hear God calling to you, speaking to you about your work and God’s vision for you.

And to see progress on your personal projects. Don’t return to heaven with a book in you meant for earth. We are going to start this workshop with hope. We came here with different hopes about for our writing and that is our starting place. We are going to do these four things:

Ground Rules

We believe that there are ways to create a setting, a space and time for you to relax, hear God and focus on your passion.

1. We will be in prayer, asking God to hold our burdens, our crises, the things we have left undone. We trust God can protect us and shield us so that we can honor the time we have been given.
2. We ask that you leave your cell phones in your rooms. This is extremely difficult. Maybe the first day, leave it on silence in your pocket. Maybe the second day, in a bag in the back of the room. Maybe the third day, turned off but in the room. But please, only check your phone during tea breaks, meals and free time.
3. Be present and active in all the sessions. This seminar is designed to build community among the participants and to support one another in the mission and business of education, theology and writing. Write as often and as much as you can. Do not judge yourself or the words on the paper. This is the time to clear your mind, get old ideas on paper and be inspired by new ones. For example, like the brown water that first comes out of the tap.
4. Write as often and as much as you can. Do not judge yourself or the words on the paper. This is the time to clear your mind, get old ideas on paper and be inspired by new ones. For example, like brown water that first comes out of the tap.

Morning Pages

Morning pages are 3 pages of longhand writing, strictly stream of consciousness. Brain drain. There is no wrong way to do morning pages. They are not meant to be art or even good writing. No one is allowed to read your morning pages except you. Your mood doesn’t matter. You can complain, whine or be angry. Three pages of whatever comes to your mind. If you can’t think of anything to write, write “I can’t think of anything to write,” until you think of something else to write.

Those who have done morning pages for some time say that their other writing seems to be more free and expansive and somehow easy to do.

Challenge to the group to do morning pages every day.

Exercise: Write Your Vision

Read Habukkuk’s Prayer, *Habukkuk 2: 1- 3.*

Take your pen and your paper.

Spread out around the room.

Take 15 minutes to write your prayer…

 What is your personal vision for writing?

 What is your vision for resources for the UMC in your context?

Questions:

 What was it like to write for 15 minutes?

 What made it difficult?

 What did you appreciate?

* Gather with one or two other people to share your vision.
* Gather as a group to hear a few of the visions.

Closing Thoughts

Remember in All Writing

1. Writing is Hard Work. Read aloud *Psalm 126:5,-6 (Sow in tears, reap in joy)*
2. God has called you to do this.
3. What you are writing is critical.
4. Be committed.
5. Create Time.
6. FINISH.