Welcome to the “Creative Writing” issue of *Mutuality*! This is a new adventure for us, as we have never before published an issue entirely filled with creative writing. Much prayer has gone into this issue—which has been in the works for nearly three years—and we hope that you find it to be refreshing, encouraging, and challenging.

As the popular magazine of Christians for Biblical Equality, *Mutuality* works to make accessible the intellectual ideas about gender, authority, and the kingdom of God. Whereas our sister publication, *Priscilla Papers*, engages in the important task of scholarly research, *Mutuality* seeks to bring that research “to the masses.” We often work to this goal through publishing personal stories of our members, or devotionals on relevant Bible passages. But art, and more specifically creative writing, plays a significant role in *Mutuality*’s mission, as well. How?

First, art can serve as a prophetic voice. It can challenge us to clearly see problems that we otherwise would not recognize. Twentieth century Catholic novelist Walker Percy believed that art serves this purpose. Referencing the practice of miners who carried canaries deep into mines in order to warn them of toxic gases like carbon monoxide, he compares canaries to artists. "When the canary gets unhappy, utters plaintive cries, and collapses," he writes, "It may be time for the miners to surface and think things over." Art is often used by God to alert us of toxic environments filled with sin and injustice. Similarly, creative writing on the experiences and treatment of women can awaken the body of Christ to the sin and injustices of gender inequality in the church.

Second, whereas so much communication from egalitarians tells us about biblical equality, art has the ability to show us. As Anne Lamott suggests in *Bird by Bird*, the point of creative writing is to make human experience sensible to others. By engaging our senses and our emotions, creative writing can help us to understand the perspectives and experiences of others in a way that exchanging intellectual ideas may not. It appeals to the common humanity in all of us. “Writing and reading decrease our sense of isolation,” Anne Lamott writes. “They deepen and widen and expand our sense of life: they feed the soul.” In this way, creative writing helps to foster solidarity and empathy, which, as Mimi Haddad demonstrates in her article on page 22, are crucial characteristics of reform movements because they compel us to act against injustice. Creative writing, therefore, serves an important and unique role in our work to advance biblical equality.

In this issue

To this goal of being a prophetic and empathetic voice in the church, we are pleased to include a variety of creative pieces in this issue of *Mutuality*, including a parable, original illustrations, music, narratives, and many types of poetry. Please take note of the questions for reflection included at the close of the longer pieces. May they help us to engage more deeply in our call as Christians to “pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding” (Rom. 14:19, NRSV). Blessings to you as you read and reflect!

Megan Greulich is the editor of *Mutuality* magazine. She may be reached at mgreulich@cbeinternational.org.

What do you think of this issue of *Mutuality*? Email us at cbe@cbeinternational.org. And, help us spread the word by sharing links and your thoughts on Facebook and Twitter!