The Ministry of Writing
AN ANNUAL COLLOQUIUM

Earlham School of Religion

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:
Jana Riess

The Writer’s Market Guide to Getting Published, What Would Buffy Do?
and several other books. Her newest book, releasing in November 2013, is The Twible: All the Chapters of the Bible in 140 Characters or Less . . . Now with 68% More Humor!

She holds degrees in religion from Wellesley College and Princeton Theological Seminary, and a Ph.D. in American religious history from Columbia University.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS: Writing Through Failure

“Get back on the horse that threw you,” Margaret Atwood said recently, in reference to her many failures as a writer. But she also observed, “You learn as much from failure as you learn from success.” Why is the process of writing so heart-wrenching, so harrowing? In this session, Jana Riess shares stories of failure—failure to publish, failure to write, failure to even begin. Her deft stories of failure and success serve as a reminder: you learn from failure, so that you may succeed. Why is the process of writing so heart-wrenching, so harrowing? In this session, Jana Riess shares stories of failure—failure to publish, failure to write, failure to even begin. Her deft stories of failure and success serve as a reminder: you learn from failure, so that you may succeed.

Jana Riess

November 1-2, 2013

Richmond, Indiana
Jana Riess — Writing Your Memoir

Many people yearn to write a memoir but don’t know how to go about it. In this workshop, Jana Riess shares techniques for focusing your memoir, choosing what to include, and finding your unique voice. Part of the workshop time will be devoted to crafting a brief personal story after receiving a writing prompt. Whether you envision your memoir for yourself or for your family or something you hope to publish for the wider world, this workshop will help you begin to tell your story. Learn more at www.janariess.com.

Jana Riess is the author of Flowering Sinai: The Winter’s Market: Guide to Getting Published, What Would Buffy Do? and several other books. Her new book, released in November 2013, is the Testicle: All the Chapters of the Bible in 140 Characters or Less...Now with 68% More Humor! She holds degrees in religion from Wellesley College and Princeton Theological Seminary, and a Ph.D. in American religious history from Columbia University.

David Carlson — The Art of the Interview: Spicing Up Nonfiction

How to get people naturally to enjoy listening in on the conversations of others. While readers may find page after page of an author’s writing interesting, fewer than 10% of your readers are often drawn into writing that includes interviews. This workshop will offer advice and practice in the “how to’s” of effective interviewing: how to choose interview subjects; how to create compelling interview questions; how to edit interviews for nonfiction writing, and how to include the effects of such interviews on your, the interviewee.

Dr. David Carlson is the Charles O. and Kathleen B. Van Nuys Dean’s Fellow in religious studies at Franklin College in Indiana. His B.A. degree in political science from Wheaton College, his B.A. degree in biblical studies from American Baptist Seminary of the West, and his Ph.D. in New Testament from the University of Aberdeen, Scotland. In addition to teaching, he also writes editorials on religion, politics, and culture for the Daily Journal, the Columbia Republic, and the Indianapolis Star. David’s book, Peace Be with You: Monastic Wisdom for a TERROR-FILLED World, was published by Thomas Nelson in 2011, was given a starred review by Library Journal, and is looking forward to using this training and formation to launch into ministry in new forms. Learn more at www.amyldowen.com.

Amy Lyles Wilson — Field Guide for Your Creative Journey

Where do I start? How do I map out my creative project? Do I have to sign with an agent? What about feeling blocked? Creative souls confront myriad obstacles on their journeys, from the mundane to the monumental. Whether it’s proper grammar, daily discipline, or fear of success that threatens to throw you off track, we’ll base hands-on prompts, brainstorming, and Q&A to inspect the tools you need to keep your dreams moving forward. Just starting out? We’ll talk about developing solid creative practices. Almost at your destination? We’ll look at ways to get your work noticed. Should your next step require a simple repositioning or a major resettling, this workshop makes for a reliable and inspiring travel companion.

Amy Lyles Wilson is a writing and creativity coach who has worked in publishing since receiving her master’s degree in journalism in 1986. She served as an adjunct writing professor and writer-in-residence at ESR in 2013, and was the Patrick Henry Writing Fellow there in 2003. Wilson earned her master’s degree in theological studies from Vanderbilk University Divinity School in 2007. Her work has appeared in a variety of publications, as well as on National Public Radio. She leads workshops and retreats on such topics as creativity, spirituality, and grief. Learn more at www.amyllysowen.com.

Jeff Hardin — Writing Poems No Matter What

Writers often go through fallow periods—a month, a year, even several months—but what if knowing the possible “conceptual strategies” for generating and shaping poems, each a different “kind of poem” so that, no matter what, you can always be writing? Jeff Hardin is a poet and the author of Full Sanctuary, recipient of the Nicholas Roerich Prize, and Notes for a Peace Book. His poems have appeared in The Southern Review, Hudson Review, North American Review, Gettysburg Review, Poetry Northwest, Massachusetts Review, Plainsong, and elsewhere. He was the 2013 Workshop Participant for the Mullen Writing Fellowship.

In this session, we will explore 14 “conceptual strategies” for generating and shaping poems, each a different “kind of poem” in order to receive some practical writing tips for getting your work noticed. Should your next step require a simple repositioning or a major resettling, this workshop makes for a reliable and inspiring travel companion. Jeff teaches at Columbia State Community College in Columbia, Tennessee, and his website is www.jeffhardin.wedgey.com.

Friday, November 1
6:30 p.m. Registration
7:00 p.m. An Evening with the Poets: Amy Lyles Wilson, Read From Their Words
9:00 p.m. Workshop: Poets Read from Their Words
Saturday, November 2
8:15 a.m. Registration
10:15 a.m. Workshop Session One (choose one)
12:15 p.m. Lunch
1:30 p.m. Workshop Session Two (choose one)
2:45 p.m. Break
3:00 p.m. Closing Gathering
4:30-6:30 p.m. Coffee House/Open Mic

Jeff Hardin — Writing Poems No Matter What


More Than Mere Words: Life, Spirit, and Power — Marcelle Martin — Writing Poems No Matter What — Jeff Hardin


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Registration fee covers all colloquium events, including Friday night readings, all plenary sessions, and workshops. Saturday continental breakfast and lunch (plus a break-out session) Saturday night.

Send registration to: Writing Colloquium 2013, Mandy Ford, Earlham School of Religion, 228 College Avenue, Richmond, IN 47374-1-800-432-1377, E-mail: ford@earlham.edu

Jana Riess — Writing Your Memoir

Marcelle Martin — More Than Mere Words: Life, Spirit, and Power

Anna Woofenden — Writing Your Image of God

The Ministry of Writing Colloquium: “The Ministry of Writing” colloquium was inspired by individuals in honor of Tom Malles at the time of his retirement as Dean of Earlham School of Religion in 1999. Tom retired from ESR in 1997. He passed away in June, 2009. The name “Writing for the Religious Market” was adopted over 20 years ago, was the beginning of ESR’s unique emphasis in the ministry of writing. This colloquium is one way the school demonstrates its commitment to the written word as an important form of ministry. The colloquium will be held in the ESR Center at the northwest corner of the Earlham Campus. A finalized schedule and room assignments will be available at registration.