



## Open-Mic Night

"When we write stories, we are like children who play dress up—they understand life better because they are playing it," said Molly Lewis, staff member at Grace Long Beach (Long Beach, Calif., Lou Huesmann, pastor) and organizer of the church's Open-Mic Nights. "It's one of the things that writing and creating music does—it helps us better understand the world God made by participating in his creative work."

What began as a quarterly writers' workshop became a means of worshipful expression and outreach for the church. Events include poems and creative non-fiction pieces alongside singing and preaching. It only made sense that such a unique facet of their worship services became a way to invite nonbelievers into the Christian writers' midst.

Lewis praised the development of an Open-Mic Night as a way to "reach out to the community in ways that are accessible to them. It's a lot easier to invite your neighbor to Open-Mic Night to get to know Christians in an unthreatening environment," she said. The event is often the only exposure community members have to a Christian community.

In many ways, Grace Long Beach intentionally showcases and values the creativity of its members. To Lewis, it simply is a way of "manifesting the image of our Creator, [which] glorifies Him."

*This story was first published at [graceconnect.us/open-mic-night-brings-creativity-to-grace-long-beach/](http://graceconnect.us/open-mic-night-brings-creativity-to-grace-long-beach/). Go to [graceconnect.us](http://graceconnect.us) to subscribe to the weekly e-newsletter that shares how God is working among the people of the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches.*

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