



Writing Guidelines for LCC

Updated June 2022

As LCI grows, it is necessary for us to set forth some guidelines for writers so that everyone can have approximately the same expectations. We also want to make effective use of our time while also assisting you in becoming better writers and defenders of liberty.

What Should You Write About?

Make your content relevant to current events, but also evergreen

Oftentimes you will be inspired to write about a topic based on current events. This could result in a piece that's an analysis of the recent event(s), a piece providing guidance on how to think about what took place, or something else entirely. However you write about current events, keep in mind that we hope our readers in the future will find reading your article advantageous, even if the event is not "current."

Find topics that are being talked about in libertarian and Christian circles

Not every topic is relevant at any time, so when possible, write about things that are part of the current social conversation happening. This could mean writing about a topic that your non-libertarian pastor just preached about, or it could mean writing about a controversial issue that the society at large is engaged in. Take cues from the Christian websites or magazines you read and write about those things as well.

Make your content relevant to the mission of LCI

Articles can touch on a wide range of issues which are not directly related to Christianity or libertarianism, but your thesis should always clearly tie back in some way to the broad purposes of LCI. Become familiar with the [Mission, Vision, and Core Values of LCI](http://libertarianchristians.com/mission) so that you can easily recall them and even find inspiration in your writing toward these purposes. You are also free to argue for contentious points within Christian theology or libertarian political philosophy, but remember that LCI is read by a wide, ecumenical Christian audience within the framework of the Apostles and Nicene Creeds. Contentious topics should be discussed and debated with a tone of respect towards other Christians.

- <http://libertarianchristians.com/mission>

Write about Scripture passages that speak to ideas found in our Mission, Vision, and Core Values statements

Similar to the above, find a passage you believe speaks to some of the core issues we're promoting, and write about them. You don't have to be a theologian to write accurately. Sometimes it can be a reflection or musing over a passage, depending on the purpose and tenor of the piece.

Do your homework and leverage LCI's archive

Keep in mind that LCC has 10+ year history and many topics have been discussed in the past. This does not mean you should *not* write about a particular topic, but doing your due diligence to see what we have published previously and even referencing and linking those articles/media is highly encouraged. Imagining that your audience may not be familiar with the corpus of Christian libertarian literature is useful, and giving them the ability to further their knowledge is worthwhile. For instance, linking to our [Get Started Here](https://libertarianchristians.com/resources/) page for new readers is quite useful.

- <https://libertarianchristians.com/resources/>

How Should You Submit a Quality Post?

Self-edit for Spelling and Grammar

The editor should not have to fix common mistakes multiple times per article. LCC articles are meant to be read by everyday people and we are not overly rigid on formal grammar and structure. We also want to preserve your unique voice, and sometimes that means allowing the formal rules to be bent or broken. Additionally, every writer makes mistakes, and even great writers can benefit from editing. However, articles with obvious, frequent errors should not be submitted and may be rejected. Please respect the editor's time by carefully editing your own work first, especially for things like tense, subject/verb agreement, and using words that make contextual sense. Remember, Microsoft Word has an built-in spelling and grammar check feature, and additional plugins such as Grammarly can assist you even more.

- <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/common-grammar-mistakes-list>
- <https://www.fluentu.com/blog/english/english-grammar-tips/>
- <https://authority.pub/common-grammar-mistakes/>
- <https://www.grammarly.com/>
- <http://www.hemingwayapp.com/>

Write Primarily in Active Voice

Passive voice can be useful, but whenever possible you should stick with the active voice.

- <https://www.quickanddirtytips.com/education/grammar/active-voice-versus-passive-voice>

Get to the Point

While we expect most article submissions to be 700-1200 words in length, we discourage excess verbosity because it weakens writing quality and distracts from the argument. We expect sufficient rigor in argument, but do not forget that LCI content is meant just as much for laity as for scholars. Lengthy articles are fine if they are substantive, but generally writers should opt for the least amount of words possible to effectively make their point.

- <https://www.copyblogger.com/brilliant-writing-tips/>

Follow Best Practices for Clean URLs

Websites commonly attach a unique identifying string to URLs in order to track shares. You can often identify these strings as a random combination of letters, numbers and/or symbols that appear at the end of a URL. The page will still open correctly without that string, so removing it when linking in a post is preferable. You can do this by testing URLs for the shortest version that actually works, or using browser add-ons in Firefox or Chrome/Chromium to remove identifying strings.

- <https://knowledge.hubspot.com/landing-page-user-guide-v2/how-to-create-a-tracking-url-for-a-landing-page>

Properly Link Sources Without Footnotes

We avoid using footnotes for technical reasons, so please integrate any sources directly into the text by naming the author, publication, or resource and linking to it with clean, descriptive hyperlinks (see above for clear URLs). This gives our readers a smooth experience while reading your work. For Scripture, include the verse(s) in the body, and include version (NRSV is preferred, but this is not mandatory). If multiple sources are needed, add a brief “Sources” section at the end as a bulleted list. Keep links to a reasonable number for readability.

Continue building your writing skills

We encourage each of our writers to further their personal education in the art of writing and rhetoric, and to that end we recommend the following resources.

- [Economical Writing](#) by Deirdre McCloskey
- [Everybody Writes](#) by Ann Handley
- [The Elements of Style](#) by Strunk and White
- [On Writing Well](#) by William Zinsser

- [On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft](#) by Stephen King (yes, really)
- For the younger aspiring writers, [Format Writing](#) by Frode Jensen
- <https://www.uc.utoronto.ca/passive-voice>

Steps to Submitting an Article

1. Write your article

You can write your article in whatever app you desire, but at some point, you will need to send us Google Doc version of your article.

2. Choose a featured image for your article

This is the picture in the title background of your article. Please do not submit images that you don't have rights to use; this can create problems for LCI. There are multiple websites where you can obtain free images which are suitable for use. Ideally, images should be in landscape mode, though if the absolute best photo is in portrait mode, that's okay, too.

- <https://www.pexels.com/royalty-free-images/>
- <https://burst.shopify.com/free-images>
- <https://pixabay.com/>
- <https://unsplash.com/>
- <https://www.freeimages.com/>
- <https://freephotos.cc/>
- Elements.envato.com (we have a subscription to this, and therefore can pull images from here if you send us the link)
- Thenounproject.com (we have a subscription to this, and therefore can pull images from here if you send us the link)

Recommended image size is 980x500 (or approximately 2:1)

3. Submit article to LCI

Go to www.libertarianchristians.com/submissions to submit your article.

4. Our General Editor will receive an alert and get back to you within 5-7 business days

Once we review it, we will let you know of any changes to be made, or when to expect its publication.