



The Volunteer Assignment Writer Program

Volunteer Assignment Writers

Volunteer Assignment Writers are skilled writers (described below) who complete 2 to 3 story writing assignments per month as assigned by the Baptist New Mexican (BNM) editor. Assignments are news-style articles of 350 to 600 words, not opinion or fiction assignments.

Volunteer Assignment Writers (Assignment Writers) may write articles for their own churches as Volunteer Church Writers (Church Writers), but church articles are distinct from assignment articles. Church Writers choose what articles to write and when to write them. Assignment Writers complete assignments made by the BNM editor and complete them by the assignment deadline. Stories written as a Church Writer are assignments only when also assigned by the editor.

Volunteer writers for the BNM and GoBNM.com are at-large, assignment-based members of the New Mexico StoryTeller Network and receive assignments beyond their church or geographic location.

Assignment Writers officially represent the BNM and the Baptist Convention of New Mexico (BCNM) while working on stories.

Abilities and Skills

Assignment Writers write using good spelling and grammar, according to official BNM style. They contact church staff and members and interact with them pleasantly as they gather information for stories. They consistently distinguish fact from opinion and present both elements appropriately in articles. They also arrange and structure articles for easy reading.

Assignment Writers possess flexible and confident computer skills using word processors and Internet browsers. They meet assignment deadlines (usually between 4 and 7 days).

Membership and Character

Assignment Writers are members, in good standing, of a local BCNM church. Good standing means that an individual is generally and constructively active in his or her local church, as indicated by the church. Writers also demonstrate Christian character and live a distinctly Christian lifestyle.

Expectations

Assignment Writers submit 2-3 stories per month in a timely manner and participate in online training 1 or 2 times a year.

Annual Reviews

Assignment Writers serve based on acceptable participation and writing. The BNM team is committed to helping volunteers discover the kind of participation that best fits their abilities, skills, personalities and gifts. To that end, Assignment Writers' participation and writing are annually evaluated. Church Writers undergo different evaluations.

Article Assignment, Submission and Publishing

- The editor will assign articles through email and the BNM's online content management system. Assignments will include concept, available information, possible contacts, target length and other information. Writers must confirm acceptance of an assignment with reasonable promptness.
- Articles pass through a workflow that includes concept, assignment, drafting, submission, editing, proofing, multimedia review and final publishing. During drafting, writers collect any additional needed information and compose their assigned story.
- Articles remain the property of the BNM from concept through publishing. The BNM reserves all rights and privileges regarding all content generated under this program.
- Submitted articles are edited for spelling, style and length. The editor may alter, delete or rewrite portions of articles or may request rewrites or revisions. This is normal. Articles are rarely published without editorial modifications.
- Finalized articles will be published with the primary writer's name in the byline.

Becoming a Volunteer Assignment Writer

Submit an online application.

The online application requests complete contact information and birth year and asks for an affirmation of expectations and processes, an affirmation of church membership and personal character, and affirmation of abilities and skills.

Ask your pastor to complete an online recommendation.

Applicants ask their pastor to complete a brief, online recommendation that requires three check-box responses and asks for the applicant's name, the pastor's name, and the church's name.

Complete a sample assignment.

To evaluate writing ability, the BNM will provide a writing assignment with already gathered facts, assignment details, and style guide. The applicant must submit a finished article on time and written acceptably ready for editing.

Wait for your acceptance notification.

After all application processes are completed and evaluated, the BNM editor will inform applicants if they are accepted as Assignment Writers.

Request an application link by emailing editor Kevin Parker at kparker@bcnm.com. **Request information or ask questions**, by contacting the Baptist New Mexican at 505.924.2311.