

## Monastic Institute 2015

### Speaker Profiles

#### Marilyn Chandler McEntyre

After many years of teaching American literature, writing, and medical humanities to undergraduates, Marilyn has become a “writer who teaches” instead of a “teacher who writes.” She teaches as part-time professor of medical humanities at the UCB-UCSF Joint Medical Program, to lead retreats and workshops, and to lecture in universities, churches, and for community groups.



Three of Marilyn’s four volumes of poetry are written in response to the work of Dutch painters, Vermeer, Rembrandt, and Van Gogh: *In Quiet Light*, *Drawn to the Light*, and *The Color of Light*. Her fourth book of poems, *The Light at the Edge*, ranges from poems about family and friendship to war protest poems. Her most recent works are prose reflections on reading, writing, and language. *Caring for Words in a Culture of Lies* considers how language has eroded under the pressures of mass media and propaganda, and suggests twelve strategies of stewardship for readers who care about keeping the edges of words sharp for precision work. *Reading like a Serpent* offers a new tour through the American classic *The Scarlet Letter*, seeing in it Hawthorne’s challenge to literalists to read all texts, and especially the Bible, more imaginatively, open-heartedly, and wittily, warning them—and us—about the social and spiritual dangers of literalism. *Patient Poets* invites readers to consider what caregivers may learn from poetry by people with chronic or terminal illness. Her book, *What’s in a Phrase?* offers reflections on memorable phrases from Scripture. Her more recent books, *A Faithful Farewell* and *A Long Letting Go* are reflections for people who are dying and for their caregivers. She has written for a wide variety of publications, including *The Christian Century*, *Christianity Today*, *Books and Culture*, *Sojourners*, *Presbyterians Today*, *Comment*, *Conversations*, *Academic Medicine*, and a range of academic journals.

The people she most enjoys are those with playful minds, open hearts, and a lively sense of how the Spirit speaks.