

EVERY DAY INSPIRATION

purpose

Themes 2017–2018

September 2017: Creativity

Due January 1, 2017

A look at the world around us shows us that God is a creative creator. As part of God's creation, we are creative as well. Sometimes we think of creative people throughout history—Michelangelo, Shakespeare, Maya Angelou—and then discount our own ability to be creative creators. Yet we each have that ability as people made in the image of God. Share a story about your creative endeavors, or those you observe in someone else. Does Christian faith play a role in these creative expressions? How are people encouraged to be creative?

October 2017: Serving Others

Due February 1, 2017

Helping and serving others is, for many Christians, a part of their faith. Sometimes service happens locally as people volunteer with church and community agencies or help out a neighbor. Other times, people leave their communities and travel to places of service around the world. Share examples of service that you have done or have observed. Why have you been motivated to serve? How has serving others changed your life? How has faith played a role in your serving others? Share a story about your experience.

November 2017: Counting Blessings

Due March 1, 2017

Count your blessings! Take time to look around you and think about the many ways you can see and feel God's blessings. Sometimes, when life is difficult, it's hard to notice God's blessings. Other times, it's easy to see how God has blessed your life and the lives of those around you. In what ways have you been blessed? How have you taken time to notice God's blessings? Share a story about being blessed.

(Because of the number of stories we receive about blessing journals, please choose to write about another aspect of counting blessings.)

December 2017: Peace

Due April 1, 2017

For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. —Isaiah 9:6

Jesus was born the Prince of Peace, as in the words of Isaiah. Jesus taught those around him how to have peace with God and peace with others. Reflect on Jesus' birth as the Prince of Peace. What does this mean to you? How do you experience Jesus' life and ministry as showing people the way of peace? Give glory to God as you share stories about peace in your life, your community, and around the world.

January 2018: Setting Priorities

Due May 1, 2017

People lead busy lives, and the new year is a good time to evaluate priorities. It seems that we always have many options, and sometimes there are difficult decisions about what we will do. How do we make those decisions? How do we determine priorities that factor into those decisions? Share about a priority in your life. How does your Christian faith help you decide to make that priority important?

February 2018: Everyone Is a Minister

Due June 1, 2017

It's not just pastors who minister. Everyone is called to minister, whether to the neighbor across the street, to a family member, or to someone who is hurting. Sometimes we are the ones who are ministered to. What types of ministry have you been involved in? In what ways have others ministered to you? Share a story that will help people minister to others.

March 2018: Mentoring

Due July 1, 2017

Many times, older people mentor younger people, whether informally or through a formal church or club program. How have you been mentored throughout life? How have you mentored others? What are the benefits of different generations working alongside each other? Share stories about your experiences and offer encouragement to others.

April 2018: Be Transformed

Due August 1, 2017

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect. —Romans 12:2

Relating with other people, taking classes, reading the Bible—these are just some of the experiences that can lead to personal transformation. Share about ways you've been transformed; write a story that shows how your life has changed through your relationship with God, with other people, or through other ways. What have you learned about yourself?

May 2018: Faith Communities

Due September 1, 2017

Faith communities are important to many Christians. Faith communities are where believers gather to worship, praise, and pray together; to share their lives and fellowship. What involvements in your faith community, your congregation, are the most important to you? How does connecting with a community of believers encourage you in your faith journey? Does your congregation have any unique practices and traditions? Share a story about how, and why, you connect with a faith community.

June 2018: Being Content

Due October 1, 2017

Not that I am referring to being in need; for I have learned to be content with whatever I have. —Philippians 4:11

Finding peace, joy, and satisfaction—in other words, being content—is a state of mind rather than a reflection of our physical surroundings. Some people experience contentment while in a carefully cultivated, quiet garden. Others experience contentment in the midst of busy city streets. Where, and how, do you experience it? Are there areas where you need to learn to be content despite the situations around you? Share a story about a time when you experienced contentment.

July 2018: Trust

Due November 1, 2017

Trust is an important part of life. We need to trust other people to take care of us, such as when we visit a health clinic or take the car to a mechanic. We also trust God, who loves us and assures us of a plan for our lives. Sometimes it's easy to trust people and it's easy to trust God. Other times, there are situations and experiences that don't allow us to trust as fully as we want to. Share about a time when you trusted that an outcome would be okay. What was it like to trust during that experience? Are there times when we need to practice trusting even when we don't feel like it?

August 2018: One Generation to Another

Due December 1, 2017

Families and society consist of different generations interacting with each other on a regular basis. Each generation is made unique by having shared experiences, culture, and understandings that might not always translate to other generations. Many times people learn to work across the generations, whether in family circles, church settings, or neighborhoods, and discover the benefits of interacting with people of different ages. Share a story about your interactions across the generations. What motivated you to develop such relationships? How have you benefitted?