

E V E R Y D A Y I N S P I R A T I O N

purpose

Follow the themes when writing stories for Purpose magazine. The explanations are to help you think about themes; you do not need to answer any of the sentences or questions directly.

September 2018: This is the day (Psalm 118:24)

DUE JANUARY 1, 2018

Each day is a gift from God. As the days turn into months and years, we can point to specific days and times that were extraordinary, days and times when we remembered to praise God and rejoice. We also notice times that aren't as memorable, when life continued in ordinary ways. Consider your days. How do you spend them? When you look back over time, do any particular days stand out to you? Share stories about the gift of your days, the extraordinary and the ordinary, and how you rejoice and are glad in them.

October 2018: Courage

DUE FEBRUARY 1, 2018

It's not always easy to do and say what is right. Sometimes it takes an extra dose of courage to address less-than-ideal situations, to do what we believe we are called to do, to do the right thing. We may face the need for courage as we go about our daily lives, are in difficult situations, or when we live our lives in the way we believe Jesus teaches us to live. How have you noticed people around you being courageous? Or, how have you experienced courage in your own life? Share stories that will inspire and encourage others to be courageous too.

November 2018: Studying the Bible

DUE MARCH 1, 2018

Christians are privileged to study God's Word, drawing them closer to the Creator and Savior. The Bible gives inspiration, meaning, and encouragement to guide and inform one's faith. Think about why you study the Bible and what it means to be able to do so. Consider a Bible study method you prefer, and why. Do you study the Bible in the same way you did a few years ago, or has your Bible study changed over time? Do you prefer to study the Bible individually or with a group? Share your experiences of delving into God's Word.

December 2018: God is with us

DUE APRIL 1, 2018

The Advent and Christmas season is a sacred time to remember that God is with us. God lived among us in the form of Jesus, and continues to teach and guide us in the form of the Holy Spirit. As we decorate the tree, light candles, and sing carols, let's give thought to the ways in which we experience the presence of God with us. Share stories about how you recognize that God is among us and what that means to you.

January 2019: Beginnings

DUE MAY 1, 2018

As the new year begins, take time to think about other beginnings in your life. Beginnings might be out of your control and happen to you, and new beginnings might also happen within you. Or perhaps you've taken steps in your life to develop something new, a new way forward, a new project, or a new outlook on life. Share stories about these times, before and after. How have these beginnings changed your life? How has your Christian faith played a role in these beginnings?

February 2019: Spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:4-11)

DUE JUNE 1, 2018

Teaching, healing, prophesying . . . the apostle Paul lists these activities, along with others, as spiritual gifts. Gifts given to us by the Spirit are not limited to this list, however; the Spirit is generous and capable of granting a variety of gifts. Choose one of the spiritual gifts Paul lists, or one that you've observed in yourself or in someone else. How is the gift used for the common good (1 Corinthians 12:7)? Share a story about the gift, what it means to you, and what it means to the community.

March 2019: Our stories

DUE JULY 1, 2018

What's your story? That's what we ask people when we want to know more about them. After all, everyone has stories to share about themselves, their congregations, and their communities. Some stories are even passed from one generation to another, giving meaning to people's lives and communities and helping to make sense of the world. So here's your opportunity to share a story with others about you or your community. What are the stories that shape your life and give it meaning?

April 2019: Good news

DUE AUGUST 1, 2018

Jesus is alive! Easter is a time of great joy, of knowing that because Jesus lives, we can live too. This is, indeed, good news. Think for a moment about what this good news means to you and how you live your life because of it. Though the good news of Easter is amazing and beyond compare, it is not the only type of good news we experience. In what other situations do you hear good news? How do you share it with others? Share stories about your experiences.

May 2019: Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-12)

DUE SEPTEMBER 1, 2018

"Blessed are . . ." Jesus taught the Beatitudes during the Sermon on the Mount, when he wanted his followers to understand how they are to live. Is there a particular beatitude that stands out to you as one you desire to better follow? When have you observed someone living out the Beatitudes? What was the effect on that person's life and the lives of those around that person? Share stories of those who aspire to live their lives by the teachings of Jesus as he taught in the Beatitudes.

June 2019: Celebrations

DUE OCTOBER 1, 2018

The lazy days of summer are upon us, when many families take vacations and plan activities that celebrate warm weather and family bonds. Aside from summer celebrations, events take place all year long that call for celebrations—birthdays, anniversaries, births, graduations, holidays . . . the list goes on. What types of occasions do your family and friends celebrate? Do you have special celebration traditions? Do you observe any faith-based celebrations? Share your stories of celebration.

July 2019: Fellowship

DUE NOVEMBER 1, 2018

Faith, food, and fellowship: these alliterative words are many times used to describe church experiences. Fellowship can happen with people in your faith community, particularly as you enjoy food together, but it also happens as you spend time with God, your neighbors, your family. In what ways do you seek fellowship? How is your life enriched because of it? Share stories about meaningful fellowship times and how they have affected your life.

August 2019: Blessed are the children (Mark 10:13-16)

DUE DECEMBER 1, 2018

Jesus blessed the children, even as other adults tried to prevent them from approaching Jesus. He took them seriously. In what ways have you been intentional about taking children's faith and wisdom seriously? Have you had children who have inspired and encouraged you? Share a story about children in your life who have been a blessing to you, and share about ways you have blessed them.