

# Mennonite Publishing Network

## Faith & Life Resources Division

### *Purpose*

STORIES OF FAITH AND PROMISE

#### Monthly themes

*Purpose*, a monthly publication of Mennonite Publishing Network (MPN) through the Faith & Life Resources Division, is intended to nurture adults in their life of Christian discipleship.

Monthly themes for issues of *Purpose* magazine are described in the following listing. These are intended to help writers make informed choices in their submissions for publication in *Purpose* magazine. The descriptions are guidelines only—other topics that fit the theme will be considered.

Guidelines for writers are described in the document, “Writer Guidelines Purpose.” The writer guidelines provide details as to the needs of the magazine. It is available as a download from the MPN website, [www.mpn.net](http://www.mpn.net). Writers may also contact the editorial office by email to receive electronically the Word files of the Writer Guidelines and Monthly Themes.

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**April 2011--Health—Due August 15**

How does one achieve mental, emotional, and physical health? How does a person face situations of health being less than what they'd hoped for? How does the Christian community work towards the health and well-being of all peoples? How do we each find our own life balance?

**May 2011—Bible—Due September 1**

The Bible is the record of God's dealing with humanity. People come to the Bible to know its story and message, for spiritual growth, for direction toward living a transformed life, for its message of hope. It can be read with the heart and with the head, alone or with others.

**June 2011—Home—Due September 1 (yes same date)**

Home is a place where you find yourself--a place of origin, a place where you fit. What happens when "home" is broken in one way or another? Is this world our home, or are we just passing through? Home is being with Christ here and now and in eternity (home-going.) How do you take "home" with you when you relocate to another country, a nursing home, etc. How does where you live shape you spiritually—the plains, mountains, city, rural?

**July 2011—Body—Due September 1 (yes, same date)**

How do we experience spirituality through our body? What roles do exercise, play, prayer postures, yoga, foot washing, anointing, and massage play? How do we interpret "strength" in "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind and strength." How do you deal with a body that has impairments? What can we learn from children and animals, who know how to play and enjoy their bodies? How do we accept the "okayness" of bodies that are far from perfect?

**August 2011 –Mentoring—due December 1**

How do church and career mentoring relationships change lives? What are the perspectives from both sides of the relationship? How do we pass on leadership without wanting it to be done "our way"? How are older people mentored by younger people, as well as the reverse?

**September 2011—A closer walk—Due January 1, 2011**

How do corporate worship and solitude shape our spiritual lives? What can we learn when God feels distant and absent? What role does Sabbath play? What allows you to see the Holy in all of life?

**October 2011—How much is enough?—Due February 1**

How does one deal with the paradox of not worrying about the future, yet being good stewards and planning for the future? What does it mean to hold on and let go? Does “enough” change depending on a person’s age?

**November 2011—Gratitude—Due March 1**

A life well-lived is one of gratitude. People who have so little and who are in disasters are often still so grateful. Are gratitude journals helpful? How do we teach our children gratitude? How do we acknowledge diminishing qualities of “the good life” and yet remain grateful?

**December 2011--Across Generations—Due April 1**

How do you deal with the “unempty nest”? How do millennials think? What are the pros and cons for families that choose to live together with several generations. What are the ups and downs of grandparenting? (For example, when to say no.) What is being learned across generations?

**January 2012—And when they shall ask—Due May 1**

How do we bear witness and pass on the faith story? How do you relate to children and grandchildren who have faith beliefs different from your own? How do we incorporate the Shema (Deut. 6:4-9) in our teaching?

**February 2012—Forgiveness—Due June 1**

The Lord’s Prayer teaches us to forgive as we are forgiven. Forgiveness is not on a timetable, and it involves facing the hurt squarely. There are Victim/Offender reconciliation stories to be told. How do we recognize the offender in ourselves? What can the Amish teach us about forgiveness?

**March 2012—Spiritual Companionship—Due July 1**

The root of “companion” is “with bread.” How do we find spiritual companions? How do we face the death of a spiritual companion? How do you walk with someone going through the “dark night of the soul”? How do you allow yourself to become vulnerable?

**April 2012—Art—Due August 1**

How has the creation of art been a part of a person’s spiritual life? How does interacting with art enhance our spiritual lives? Examples of art to explore include: visual arts, quilting, photography, batik work, pottery, folk art, iconography, sculptures, painting, worship aids, prayer shawls, graphics, etc.

**May 2012—Gifts of Aging—Due September 1**

Aging with grace means unfolding rather than folding up. What wisdom has been gained through years of living? Getting older gives us the ability to let go of ambition, vanity, pretension; to gracefully accept ourselves and not try to be something we aren’t.

**June 2012—Book It!—Due October 1**

What are the books that have impacted our lives? What is your top ten list of books? Which classics should every child read? Which book of the Bible do you read the most? What draws you to that book? Has that changed through the years?

**July 2012--You are what you eat—Due November 1**

How is the food we eat a justice issue? What does it mean to be the body of Christ, broken for the world? What responsibility do we have to ourselves and to the people of the world to choose our food wisely?