



United Pentecostal Church Intl  
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## Penning Your Prayers

By Dinecia Gates



For most of my life, I have despised journaling. This is probably not the best statement to make when writing an article to encourage you to consider the practice of prayer journaling. For me, there's something so final and real about staring at your thoughts, vulnerabilities, and often unanswered requests on paper. However, I've learned to love it and see the benefit of it. In this season of my life, it's proven to be one of the most beneficial, healing, and revealing spiritual disciplines.

Since I adopted the practice of using a prayer journal, I've encountered God and myself in a more intimate way. I've learned so much about myself, my thought processes, and how I perceive things. I've also learned so much about the character and nature of God, and how my life experiences and perspectives have shaped the way I see Him. Additionally, prayer journaling has given me the opportunity to look back on what I've experienced and see God's goodness and faithfulness. It's also presented an opportunity to document the miracles that God has performed in my life.

### So, What is Prayer Journaling?

*Prayer journaling is the practice of keeping a record of one's prayers, thoughts, requests, praises, and reflections while communicating with God. Essentially, a prayer journal is a written log of your conversations with the Lord. It allows you to track your prayers, revisit past requests, and reflect on answered prayers.*

### How Do You Create a Prayer Journal?

*The first step is figuring out what typically works best for you. There are all sorts of resources out there. I would encourage you to search out the method of prayer journaling that works best for you.*

*There are journals available that have daily prompts for you to respond to. Some of these journals are specific to stations of life like singleness, motherhood, marriage, or for those who careers. Other prayer journals are meant to help you navigate through address areas where we are experiencing challenges or wish to fortify. Either way, prayer journals like these provide a structured way to write, address, and process our communication with God.*

*A simple journal or notebook can also be a great way to record your prayers. You can write down your requests, express gratitude for answered prayers, and explore thoughts and feelings that are sometimes hard to verbalize.*

**The beauty is there's no wrong way to prayer journal.**

*Whatever method you choose, I would encourage you to adopt the practice of prayer journaling. It will transform your life!*

Note, Dinecia Gates holds two degrees in communication, loves traveling, flowers, cupcakes, the beach, and coffee. She is a bi-vocational credentialed minister with the UPCI and serves in several capacities at her local church, New Life St. Louis, Missouri.

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## **Creating a Prayer Journal**

By JoDana Flowers



David penned prayers for help and protection that sounded like, "From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I," (Psalm 61:2). Sometimes those prayers looked like repentance, "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin" (Psalm 51:2). He journaled some Psalms when he was in distress and others begging for healing. He wrote praises and gave heartfelt thanksgiving to the God he loved. He wrote thoughts and prayers and feelings. Some of those were eloquent and some anguished. All of them are real. No guardedness or fakeness. Just a conversation between a man and his God.

Science has thoroughly tracked, proven, and validated the usefulness of mindful journaling. When done consistently, it's shown to decrease depression, reduce stress, and promote self-reflection. Even more so, the Word of God validates the power of journaling our prayers. The Bible contains one account after the next of

written, desperate prayers and living testimonies.

Please, remove the pressure of journaling as one more thing for your checklist. Stop worrying about your spelling or the neatness of your handwriting. No one is grading this. Simply write down thoughts to your Savior and Friend.

Journaling takes on many forms. You may create a gratitude journal where you keep track of daily thanksgiving. Maybe it is scribbled sermon notes and jotted down prayer requests. Perhaps it's prayers marked in the margins of your Bible as you study.

Steps to Start:

1. Keep it simple. Start with just a few minutes.
2. Don't overthink it. It doesn't have to be publication worthy. In fact, you may enjoy bullet point journaling where you simply list prayer requests and answered prayers.
3. Let it go—be as blunt, real, honest, and thankful as you feel. God can handle big emotions.
4. Anchor your journaling to when you pray or reflect on the day. You will be more consistent when you incorporate it into an already established habit.

Imagine looking back and reading your prayers for a baby as you hold your newborn. Or sharing with your child some of your journaled prayers for their future spouse as their wedding approaches. Perhaps your journal would hold countless prayers for a prodigal that comes home. Your journaled prayers become a memorial of the goodness of God.

Habakkuk 2:2 instructs, "And the Lord answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it." Those written dreams and visions become a motivator to keep us running the race.

Note, JoDana Flowers is the wife of pastor Kyle Flowers in Holly Springs, MS and the mother of three beautiful daughters. She is a principal and educator and holds a BA in English from Missouri Baptist University and a Master of Arts in Teaching from Belhaven University. In addition to teaching, she serves as a Sunday school curriculum writer for PPH/PRG. She also serves as a MS District sectional ladies director.

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## **How to Create a Prayer Journal**

By Carrie Reeves



*I need to write this down . . .* is every mother's thought at some point as she's raising her treasure from heaven. However, all too soon the moment is gone, lost in the chaos of the day. Writing something down has long been heralded as beneficial due to the combined involvement of the senses with the intellect, as well as for its impact on memory. Adding a spiritual dimension to writing our prayers can be a fresh avenue in our devotional moments with God.

Prayer journaling is as old as our beloved Scriptures. The Psalms, defined commonly as sacred songs or poems, were a prayer journal of sorts. Beyond exalting praises from deep within the authors' souls, many are profound cries of wounded spirits desperate for the only One who could help, composed as prayers.

Why not add a new dimension to your prayers with journaling the who, what, where, when, and why of requests, answers, and spiritual landmarks? If you're a mother, consider also prayer journaling the seeking of the Lord in the raising of your children. We must carry these most precious jewels of ours in prayer; likewise we must model before them the importance of a personal prayer life! Titus 2:7 encourages us to lead by example: "In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works . . ." (KJV). Once your child is developed enough, why not journal together? Simple prayers can be written, even by very young children. Once, my husband and I worked with our children on writing their own psalms. My daughter, then 9, and my son (with a little help), then 5, developed in just a few lines their most important prayer requests in a biblical "psalm" style of writing. Those psalms still hang in their rooms; we pray them from time to time as reminders of God's very present help to them.

*Where is the time? How to begin?*

1. Pick out a journal that appeals to your personality: pretty, sassy, cute, elegant, or modern!
2. Keep it easily accessible for multi-tasking moments when you think your prayers quickly as you're cleaning or cooking, or as a lady on the clock, working outside the home.
3. Take it with you when you enter a time of more focused prayer.
4. Begin with Psalm 25:4-5, one of David's journaled prayers. If you're a mother, graft in your child's name. "Shew me [and my child] thy ways, O LORD; teach me [and my child] thy paths . . ." (KJV).
5. Remember that just as much can happen in the moment of writing what's in your heart as can happen otherwise. It is prayer time. God will be with you in that moment.

Happy prayer journaling, my friend!

Note, Carrie and her husband, Rev. Braden Reeves, along with their two

treasures from heaven, Liliana and Isaac, are honored to labor for God's harvest in the country of Greece. They greatly love the people and cherish serving in God's calling. The Reeves, along with their two very spoiled mini dachshunds, Maple and Caramel, live on the island of Crete.

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**From the Editor**

Debbie Akers Robbins



God is doing mighty things!

God is opening many doors and this newsletter is now available in:

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