

Portals of Prayer

Guidelines: Sample Portfolio

Section 1: Instructions

Thank you for your interest in writing for *Portals of Prayer*. The authors for *Portals of Prayer* are assigned by a committee of editors and have been assigned through the year 2022. If you are interested in being considered for the year 2023, please complete the potential writer's profile and the samples portfolio detailed below and return prior to 12 p.m. January 15, 2021.

In order to be considered for a writing invitation, all authors must submit a sample portfolio. A completed sample portfolio consists of the following:

- **Author profile:** [Potential Writer's Profile](#)
- **Four sample devotions** (two on assigned texts and two on texts of your own choosing)
 - **Assigned texts:** Write **one devotion each** that addresses the following texts:
 - **Proverbs 9:1–6**
 - **Matthew 15:21–28**
 - **Free texts:** Write **two devotions** on texts of your own choosing.

Return your sample portfolio via e-mail attachment. Acceptable formats for your submission are either Microsoft Word or Rich Text Format. Authors should keep a copy of the electronic files they have submitted.

E-mail the completed author profile and your four sample devotions to portals@cph.org.

Due to the great interest shown by those desiring to submit a sample portfolio, the editor will not be able to correspond with you to give you a critique of your individual writing. Authors for 2023 will be selected by the beginning of March 2021 and all those who are accepted will be notified by the end of March 2021. If after submitting your sample portfolio you have not received an acceptance e-mail by April 1, 2021, it will mean you have not been selected. Sample portfolios are not retained from one year to the next, but you may submit a new portfolio for 2024. The stipend for a month's devotions and prayers is currently \$790.

Section 2: Essential Elements

A complete sample portfolio includes the author profile and the four sample devotions. The following is a sample of how each devotion's page should look:

Scripture Reading

Psalm

Bible verse (not in quotes; end with period) and citation (italicize, if possible; do not underline)

Devotion Title (upper and lower case)

Body of devotion (Double space between paragraphs)

A brief sentence prayer (Do not boldface)

IMPORTANT!

Each Bible Reading and Psalm should include no more than 30 verses each. Devotions, including the **Bible verse, title, body, and prayer** should be approximately 1,325 characters with spaces in Microsoft Word (this is approximately 245–250 words). It is a requirement that *Portals of Prayer* authors meet the required character/word counts. Sample devotions will be critiqued according to how well they adhere to the guidelines; *this includes devotion length*.

Section 3: Criteria

Sample devotions will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

1. The application of Law and the Gospel should be clearly presented and flow naturally out of the text. It is important to understand the action of the verbs—is the focus on us and what we must do (subjective), or is it on the saving work of Christ (objective)? Even in a text that is predominated by Law or teachings, you should never fail to point the reader to where forgiveness, comfort, and peace may be found. The comfort of the Gospel must predominate in each devotion.
2. The Means of Grace, i.e., the Word and the Sacraments, should not be avoided when they flow naturally from the Scripture text. Neither should Baptism and the Lord's Supper, while great and good gifts, be “shoe-horned” into a devotion unless such is a logical and/or natural extension of the biblical text.
3. While anecdotes can be used effectively, the focus of the devotion must be on the Word of God, not the anecdote. In choosing to use an anecdote, the author must demonstrate a clear connection between the anecdote and the biblical text.
4. The author is encouraged to use his or her own words instead of quoted text (except for Scripture). Should the author choose to use quoted text, the author is responsible for securing permission to use all quoted material apart from the biblical text, Luther's Works, and CPH materials.
5. Excellence in writing, accuracy in theology, and writing within specified word count will be used to determine acceptability of the manuscript.
6. Please note that all published devotions must be approved by a synod-appointed doctrinal reviewer. Therefore, a firm understanding of Lutheran theology and practice is required of our authors.