

ANATOMY OF A PRAYER LETTER

Over the years, we've seen thousands of prayer letters - good, bad, eye-catching, and some real stunners. We've put our knowledge to good use and identified some of the things that can make your prayer letter stand out from the crowd.

AN EYE-CATCHING HEADER

This is the first thing your ministry partners see when they open the letter, and you want it to look good. Make sure you have some identifying information here, so if your ministry partner tapes this to their fridge, they'll know who they're praying for...

TEXT IS 300 TO 500 WORDS, TOPS.

One of the main difficulties many people have is being "too wordy." You don't want to get too bogged down in text, otherwise, your ministry partner may put your letter down before they've finished reading it. A cardinal rule in storytelling is "show, don't tell" - you can apply it to prayer letter writing too.

You also don't want your text to be too small. Usually, if your text is too long to fit at 10pt on two-thirds of the page, you've written too much.

MAIN FONTS ARE EASY TO READ

Funky fonts may be great for getting someone's attention, but you don't want to write your letter in them. Use a sans-serif like "Arial", "Helvetica", or "Calibri" - or a serif like "Times New Roman" or "Garamond" for your main body text. This will keep your supporters from having to squint, especially if you have many older ministry partners.

OTHER PRO TIPS:

Send a high-quality, 300 dpi PDF with all fonts and photos embedded - this is standard practice for any printer and will help avoid any printer problems. If you must send a document in its native application, send any fonts that the printer might need and ask for a PDF proof.

EASY-TO-FIND CONTACT INFO

If your ministry partner has questions or wants more information, they'll want to know how to get in touch. You don't know who will want to send a short note or prayer requests - even a Christmas card!

GIVING INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE

While it's a personal preference to put your giving information on each prayer letter, it's frustrating if you don't and a supporter can't find it easily.

THREE TO FOUR PRAYER REQUESTS

These should be short and sweet - Three or four prayer requests with a moderate amount of detail will allow your prayer partners to really focus on your prayer needs.

PHOTO CAPTIONS COMPLETE THE STORY

Whether you put them next to your photos or in a group at the bottom, make sure you explain why each photo is important.

THE SMITH FAMILY *Update*

FIRST NAME LAST NAME
3413-D HUNTER ROAD / SAN MARCOS, TX 78666
EMAIL@SERVER.NET / (800) 555-5555

GIVING INFORMATION:
STAFF ACCOUNT #: 0000505
VISIT GIVE.CCCL.ORG TO GIVE ONLINE
OR SEND DONATIONS TO
CAMPUS CRUSADE FOR CHRIST
PO BOX 628222
ORLANDO, FL 32862

ABOVE: JOHN AND THE BOYS ON THE RECENT MEN'S FELLOWSHIP HIKE.

Dear friends,

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Thank you,
The Smith family

THESE PHOTOS ARE FROM OUR RECENT WILDERNESS HIKE WITH OUR FELLOWSHIP GROUP. WE HOPE YOU ENJOY THEM AS MUCH AS WE ENJOYED THE BEAUTY AND MAJESTY OF GOD'S CREATION!

SIGNATURE IN A HANDWRITTEN FONT

The exception to the font rule is the closing signature. If you're sending out 150 letters, you won't really have time to sign all of them. It may not fool most people, but a signature can add a sweet touch at the end and give your letter an added "oomph!"

TWO OR THREE MEDIUM SIZE PHOTOS

The "show-don't-tell" rule is in effect here too, but you don't want to overwhelm your letter with photos either. Unless you're doing a photo essay, choose two or three that highlight what you've been doing in your ministry and use them to illustrate your points.