

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 02/07/24**

## Pastor's illustrated prayers on display at "Yes & Amen" exhibit

**Yes &  
Amen**  
A PRAYER COLLECTION

**ART SHOW OPENING  
& BOOK SIGNING**

**MEMORIAL DRIVE UMC**  
WEDNESDAY, FEB. 28  
5:30-7 PM

**ST. PAUL'S UMC**  
SUNDAY, MARCH 3  
5:30-7 PM

**Ibraim Nascimento**  
Artist

**R. DeAndre Johnson**  
Author

HOUSTON, TX — At the end of 2020, Rev. R. DeAndre Johnson reflected on what had been a particularly turbulent year, marred by intense uncertainty, fear, and division. In response, he decided to take on a new spiritual practice of writing daily prayers to post on social media.

“I felt called to disrupt the noise of conflict,” says Rev. Johnson, whose heartfelt prayers soon caught the attention of artist and friend, Ibraim Nascimento.

The two agreed to collaborate: Johnson would write prayers and Nascimento would interpret and illustrate them, using a simple medium of black pen and gold-leaf paint. Together, they created over 60 prayers—including titles such as “To the God of the In-Between,” “Praise for the Normal,” and “A Prayer for Stopping and Moving Again”—which expose and express the deepest longings of the soul.

Eventually, Johnson and Nascimento migrated their project from social media to an independently published book. Their full-color paperback, *Yes & Amen: A Prayer Collection*, was released in October 2023, and over 500 copies have sold so far. The 132-page book features illustrated prayers organized into three parts: Praise, Petition, and Promise.

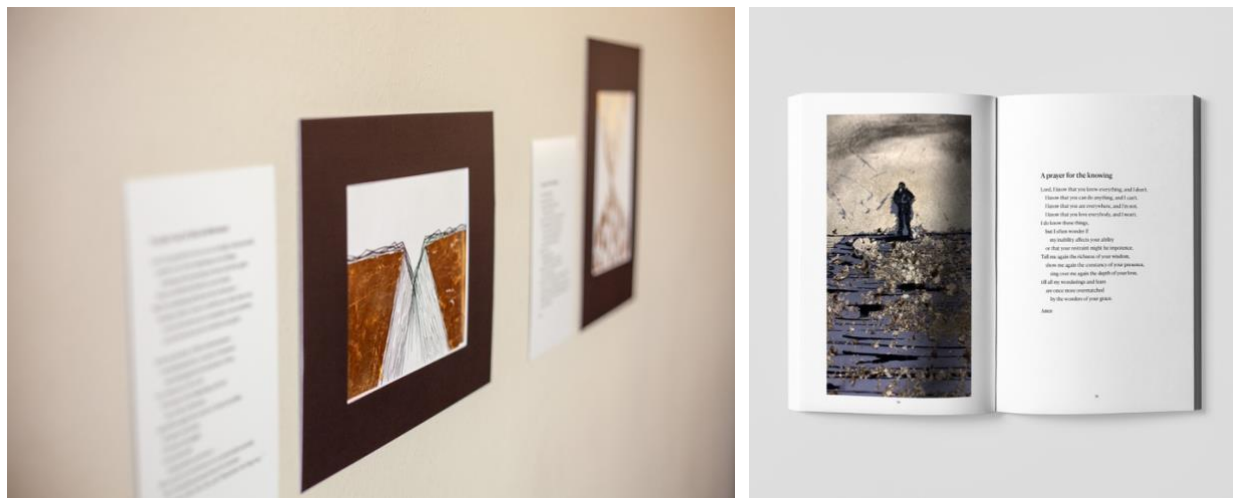
In her review of *Yes & Amen*, Bishop Cynthia Fierro Harvey remarks, “DeAndre’s prayers and Ibraim’s illustrations are a sacred combination that ought to guide us into that thin space where heaven and earth almost touch.”

Two Houston-area churches will host upcoming events to exhibit selected art and prayers from *Yes & Amen* during the season of Lent. Memorial Drive UMC, where Johnson serves as an associate pastor, will

host an art show opening and book signing on Wednesday, Feb. 28, from 5:30 to 7 p.m. in Friendship Court on their main campus. On Sunday, March 3, from 5:30 to 7 p.m., St. Paul's UMC will host a similar gathering in the first-floor gallery of their Sanctuary Building.

At both events, the author and illustrator will talk about the collaborative experience of creating *Yes & Amen: A Prayer Collection* and sign copies of the paperback available for \$15. Each church will showcase a unique collection of 12 art/prayer pieces.

These collections will be on display concurrently at Memorial Drive UMC and St. Paul's UMC through Easter (March 31).



Photos by Kelsey Johnson: Art/prayer pieces in exhibit and published book

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### Schedule

#### *Art Show Opening & Book Signing*

Wednesday, Feb. 28, 5:30 – 7 p.m.

Memorial Drive UMC, 12955 Memorial Dr, Houston, TX 77079

#### *Art Show Opening & Book Signing*

Sunday, March 3, 5:30 – 7 p.m.

St. Paul's UMC, 5501 Main St, Houston, TX 77004

### Sample Prayer

“To the God of the In-Between” by Rev. R. DeAndre Johnson

Lord, I'm grateful for how you so lovingly and graciously  
preside over all my beginnings and endings,  
assuring and reassuring me time and time again  
that you hold both firmly in your hands.  
But I'm wondering still about the in-between —  
the place where I seem to dwell more often than not,  
too far from the start to remember your promises,  
too far from the end to envision your glory.

In the uncertainty of this in-betweenness  
I am bankrupted by a vacancy of purpose  
and sabotaged by the intrusion of fear.  
So, I need you to be God  
of not just of my beginning and end  
but of my in-between,  
and tell me again the stories of cloud and pillar,  
of manna and water,  
of ravens and angels,  
of rod and staff  
and goodness and mercy —  
till I can see my in-between not as purposeless penalty  
but as intentional preparation for newness.  
In the name of the One who said “Remember the long way...”

*Amen*

#### About the Author

R. DeAndre Johnson is an ordained deacon in The United Methodist Church who has served churches in Louisiana and Texas and is currently an associate pastor at Memorial Drive UMC in Houston. He is a graduate of Centenary College of Louisiana and Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University. DeAndre is passionate about the work of reconciliation as the fundamental calling of every Christian and the most faithful witness of the church.

#### About the Artist

Ibraim Nascimento is an Afro-Brazilian visual artist who studied fine arts at the Federal University of Bahia (UFBA). Ibraim’s artwork is rich with soul, culture, and tradition. With an embodied approach to his work, each brush stroke shares a piece of his journey from his upbringing in Bahia to his migration to the United States. [www.ibraimnascimento.com](http://www.ibraimnascimento.com)