



Q & A



Making Room in Advent 25 Devotions for a Season of Wonder

September 13, 2022 | \$18, 120 pages, casebound | 978-1-5140-0483-8

“Making Room in Advent is a devotional that stays with you, moving readers to a deeper, personal connection to the Christmas story. Bette’s beautiful words and personal guided prayers capture the heart, while her powerful art pieces engage the soul and imagination. This book is an incredibly unique pathway to experiencing and preparing for the Lord’s birth.”

— Bri Johns, pastor and global collective director with Women Speakers Collective

A Holistic Encounter with God During Advent

What are some of the main reasons you decided to craft this unique book?

Bette Dickinson: I wrote this book because I was completely captivated by the mystery of the incarnation. I wanted to capture the beauty of how God works through the stories of Zechariah, Elizabeth, Mary, and the others both in the paintings and in the text.

I wanted something beautiful and inspiring but also theologically and biblically rich and grounded. I also wanted something that would slow me down and help ground me in my humanity and limitations when the world is telling me to push past them—and that would literally lead me into God’s presence.

I also felt compelled to create this book because I have seen a tremendous gap in the evangelical world in sharing the stories of Mary and Elizabeth, two women who are central to the story. I wanted other women like myself to be encouraged and inspired like I was by Mary and Elizabeth’s embodied faith, their prophetic courage, their faithfulness, and their communal sharing and encouragement in God’s call for one another.

I wanted to be inspired in my own personal relationship with Jesus but also challenged to widen my gaze to see the kingdom of God and engage the holistic impact of the Gospel. Luke’s Gospel account reveals that the kingdom of God does not just impact our souls but our bodies too. It does not just seek to save and transform individuals but whole communities.

I desired a devotional that connects issues of spiritual formation with justice and centers the marginalized in the story (as they are in Luke’s birth narrative).

I felt a gap in all of these things, and so I wanted to create them for my reader.

What is the main inspiration for this devotional?

Bette: In Luke’s birth narrative, we discover that we don’t need to have all the answers or be smart, strong, influential, successful, or wealthy in order to be used by God for his purposes. In fact, these may be obstacles for us. We are most ready to receive him and the kingdom of God when we are humble, hungry, weak, inadequate, messy, poor, and ordinary. God reveals himself through the lowly, oppressed, and overlooked in society—the Israelites, the barren, women, and shepherds. It is the humble and hungry who have the most space for God to fill. We can make room for him by making room for those who are humble and hungry and becoming humble and hungry ourselves.

In your view, what makes this devotional stand out among others during the Advent season?

Bette: Obviously the art component is unique, and I keep hearing from my readers that the art has been the most powerful component of the work. The paintings combined with the writing creates a multilayered approach that helps the reader to connect both sides of their brain and gives a holistic encounter with God.

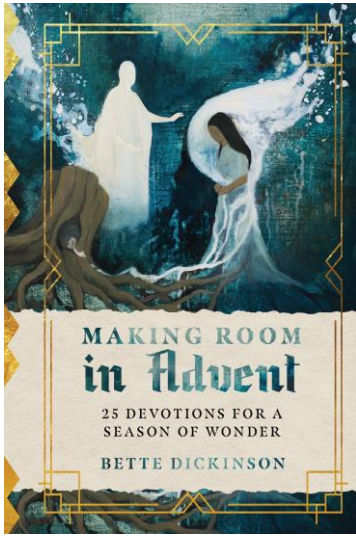


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“Making Room in Advent is an invitation to engage in that thin space of our souls where our heart and mind become one. Through breath prayers, Scripture engagement, and Bette’s transcendent artwork, the reader is engaged with an immersive devotional unlike any other.”

—**R. York Moore**, national evangelist with InterVarsity Christian Fellowship/USA and author of *Making All Things New*

What are five main takeaways you hope your reader will receive from their experience with your work?

Bette:

1. Our human limits are the very place heaven touches earth. The very place God dwells within. When we understand and embrace our limitations and depend on God in the midst of them, we will see a release of God’s power and glory in the world. We will also have the freedom to be human. God’s favor meets us in the very places we feel weak and inadequate and creates new life.
2. God has a unique and specific call for all of us; a song he has created us to sing. When, like Mary, we approach God with humility and make room for him to dwell with us, we will find him using our unique identity to partner with him in his story.
3. God’s story involves women playing a major role! Mary and Elizabeth are elevated as heroes through their humility, faithfulness, obedience, encouragement, and risk-taking pursuit of the kingdom of God. Their prophetic voices demonstrate a striking command of Scripture, understanding of theology, and humble obedience. One cannot read this devotional and miss the truth that Scripture elevates women and, in turn, elevates the readers who are women.
4. God centers the marginalized in the story. Luke’s Gospel account clearly demonstrates not only how God’s kingdom comes to the lowly, oppressed, and overlooked in that society but also how God himself becomes these things in order to bring his kingdom to earth. If we are looking for him, we will find him among the least of these. We are invited to partner with him as he seeks to elevate those oppressed and on the margins, and welcome all to God’s kingdom family.
5. God prepares his people to receive Jesus and be transformed by him through spiritual disciplines like silence, solitude, waiting, repentance, and even labor. All of these are necessary parts of what it means to allow God to birth something new in and through us.



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“Bette is a deeply prayerful person with the hands of an artist, the heart of a pastor, and the soul of a prophet. She braids together biblical teaching, spiritual formation, and prophetic painting into experiences that are as beautiful as they are substantial. . . . What a gift!”

—Lindsay Olesberg, author of *The Bible Study Handbook: A Comprehensive Guide to an Essential Practice*

The Heart of an Artist

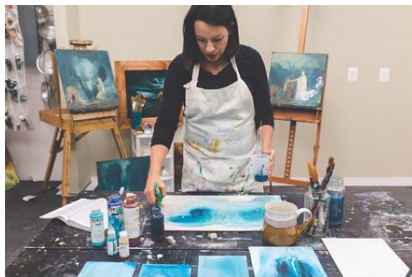
“Bette Dickinson is an incredible artist and teacher. She brings together both of these gifts in this beautiful devotional to bring to life the story of Advent. I highly encourage you to take this journey with Bette, a journey where you will be challenged to make room for God and have your life changed forever.”

—Andrew Kim, teaching pastor at Kensington Church

Bette Dickinson is a prophetic artist, writer, and speaker who invites audiences to connect with God through visual parables of the spiritual journey in her ministry *Awakening the Soul*. Bette earned her MDiv through Grand Rapids Theological Seminary and has worked with ministries like InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, World Vision, Infitum, and Kensington Church to awaken the soul through beauty and wonder.

Through creative communication, she helps her audience awaken to the beauty of God and his kingdom and see more clearly the eternal realm in the heart and in the world. Through her work, Dickinson helps her audience connect the inner life of spiritual formation with the outer life of mission.

She and her husband live in Traverse City, Michigan, with their two boys.



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