



# Presbyterians *Read*



## Instructions

### Daily Devotions

Walter Brueggemann's *Celebrating Abundance* is divided into daily devotions for the four weeks of Advent. The devotions are short (2 pages) and should only take a few minutes to read. If you are able, however, we encourage you take the time to reflect on what you are reading and go deeper by looking up the scripture readings and adding your own words to the daily prayers provided.

### Group Study

We recommend that you form small groups that meet once per week during Advent to discuss *Celebrating Abundance*. Whether you choose to reflect on these devotions alone or in a group, please feel free to adapt the material in this resource to suit your needs and context.



**Leaders:** It is helpful to assign a leader. Whether it is the same person or different leaders each week, they will be responsible for reading through this study guide ahead of time and for facilitating the discussion during the meeting. Leadership requires flexibility as well as preparation. While many people will have read each devotion, others may not have prepared as thoroughly. This study guide aims to provide entry points into the discussion for all different levels of engagement.

**Participants:** You will get the most out of this Advent book study if you set aside time each day to read Brueggemann's daily devotion. But, even if you have not kept up with the readings, be sure to still attend the discussion group gathering. You will be welcome, and the questions are structured so that you will still be able to contribute.

**Engaging with Each Other:** In Matthew 18:20, it is recorded that Jesus says: "For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." When we gather in small groups for a study like this, our aim is to celebrate Jesus' presence among us, grow in our discipleship and encourage one another in our shared journey of faith. As we gather, we engage with each other in loving and respectful ways. Our goal is not to find the "right answers" but to grow closer to Jesus and to each other.

**A Note about the Scripture Readings:** The Biblical passages that Brueggemann references throughout *Celebrating Abundance* which we are using in this study guide will be familiar to many because they are the lectionary readings for Advent. We invite you to see them with new eyes by keeping the weekly theme in mind as you read.

**Weekly Spiritual Practices:** Each week, you will be given a spiritual practice to try that aligns with the theme of the week. All weekly spiritual practices have been adapted from Adele Ahlberg Calhoun's *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices that Transform Us* (InterVarsity Press, 2015). We encourage you to engage in the exercises provided trusting that, even if you do them imperfectly, God is sure to meet you there.

### Timing

If you follow the study during the four weeks of Advent, your last session will land on Christmas—a day that most people will not be available to attend a group book study! You may want to consider starting the study the week before Advent or holding your last session in the New Year to re-group and discuss how this study shaped your Advent.