



## DETAILS



### ***Penny Preaches*** God Gives Good Gifts to Everyone!

August 13, 2024 | \$18, 32 pages, hardcover | 978-1-5140-0858-4

## Freedom to Explore God Given Gifts

Penny began to wonder . . .  
. . . could I tell stories that help people think about BIG things?  
. . . could I wear that tiny microphone?  
. . . could I teach God's words to others?

Penny loves the sermon on Sunday because she loves to think about big things. But when preaching from the front porch to her friends doesn't turn out quite as she expected, Penny wonders if she was wrong to want to teach others about God.

Written by Amy Dixon and Rob Dixon, and featuring delightful illustrations from Jennifer Davison, Penny's story reminds us that God gives good gifts to everyone!



**AMY DIXON** is the author of three picture books—*Maurice the Unbeastly*, *Sophie's Animal Parade*, and *Marathon Mouse*—as well as a middle grade novel. When she's not writing, she is editing and marketing other people's books. She writes from her home in Clovis, California, where she lives on a steady diet of popcorn and coffee.



**ROB DIXON** (DIS, Fuller Theological Seminary) is the author of *Together in Ministry: Women and Men in Flourishing Partnerships*. In addition to serving on InterVarsity staff for more than twenty-six years, Rob teaches at Fuller Theological Seminary and Fresno Pacific University. He provides training on flourishing mixed-gender ministry partnerships for numerous organizations around the country. In his free time, Rob enjoys pickleball, long runs, and cheering for the LA Dodgers.



**JENNIFER DAVISON** is a renowned artist who has illustrated over fifty picture books that have been translated into eighteen different languages! She spends most of her time illustrating faith-based books and stories from the Bible, including the Very Best Bible Stories series and *God's Big Promises Bible Storybook*. You can find out more about Jennifer and her work at [www.jensketches.com](http://www.jensketches.com).



Anna Tjernstrom, IVP Kids reviews  
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Krista Clayton, author interviews  
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## Q & A



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## God's Gifts Are Not Allocated by Gender

### What inspired you to write *Penny Preaches*?

**Amy Dixon:** We want to normalize girls being able to imagine themselves in leadership roles in the church. We have four kids: a boy and three girls. Because of Rob's work in the egalitarian field, we've always been really intentional about wanting our kids to know that girls and boys are both equally loved and valued by God. We've wanted our girls to be able to see themselves doing anything God calls them to in the church and beyond. But finding models for them has been difficult. In addition to that, as a female in ministry in my twenties, I had my leadership questioned more than once because of my gender, and I pray that we are forming a church in the future where that isn't a problem anymore.

**Rob Dixon:** I'm fortunate to have lots of motivation sources. I think about our girls and what kind of church I want them to inherit. I think about this from a justice angle—it's unjust when the church doesn't permit women to use their gifts. I think about this from a missiological angle—for two centuries the church has been trying to fulfill the great commission with half the team on the bench; let's try something different! And, pragmatically, I spend a lot of my time trying to convince boomers and Gen Xers to change their theology and practice regarding gender equality, and I hope Penny influences the younger generations such that we don't have to change their minds later on, when it can be more challenging to rethink your paradigms.

### Briefly summarize the main theme of *Penny Preaches*. What is distinctive about your approach?

**Amy:** God gives good gift to everyone. We wanted there to be a faith-based book that empowers girls to exercise their teaching gifts in the church. That is the unique thing about this book.

**Rob:** God gives good gifts to everyone! What's distinctive about our book is that we are illustrating that thesis using a little girl who aspires to preach. Go, Penny, go!

### What do you want readers to take away from your book?

**Amy and Rob:**

- God speaks to us.
- God has given each of us gifts.
- God's gifts aren't allocated by gender, with a list for men and another for women.
- We're each called to use the gifts God has given us to expand the kingdom.
- Modeling is important—it's going to be hard for a girl like Penny to become a preacher if she can't see it modeled for her, so shout out to Pastor Sarah!



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## Artwork with Warmth, Life, and Color

### What was it like illustrating *Penny Preaches*?

**Jennifer Davison:** It was an absolute delight to illustrate *Penny Preaches*. I love that illustrating this book was more than simply creating pretty pictures. It was about creating pictures that tell a story and convey a message. We will never really know how God might use this book to shape a young life. To think that this book might play a part in educating boys, while empowering girls in the coming generation to use their God-given gifts in leadership, rather than trying to change age-old traditions and theology around gender equality. It's an honor to work on a book that highlights how God is speaking. He is speaking to all of us, no matter our gender. And it's up to us to take notice and listen.

### What would you like to share about your creative process?

**Jennifer:** I work from home in my little studio in Northern Ireland, surrounded by children's books—too many to count! I'm very nostalgic so I have a lot of my '90s childhood toys on display around my studio. And of course, there's always numerous cups of tea on the go. I keep a sketchbook full of rough pencil drawings of the characters and background ideas. I always start with a sketch using a real pencil and paper, then I'll go to my computer and begin working up those sketches digitally.

Once I have the sketches and a rough composition for the book, along with the initial character designs, I send these to IVP Kids for the author's approval. Usually there is some back and forth until we find the perfect layout and design. After that I'll start digitally redrawing the characters and backgrounds using lots of layers and color. I often try to use color to portray the mood and atmosphere of a book. I strive to create artwork with warmth, life, and color. I love the playfulness of producing work for children. It's serious business but it's fun business.

### What message would you like children and the adults who read with them to see through your illustrations?

**Jennifer:** God is communicating all the time, all around us. He speaks to us all in our own unique way and he gives us each our own mandate or own divine assignment. Sometimes you just know, but sometimes it's something you discover deep inside you, a desire to do something or create something that you just can't stop dreaming about. It's what God made you to do. I pray that any child or adult reading this book that has a desire in their heart to share God's Word would be blessed. I pray that this book would help ignite that passion and hunger inside of them to find their voice. I pray that God would give them a greater sense of what they are called to do—what they were created for.



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