

## EXCERPT



### *In the Beginning We Create*

*Reflections on Collaboration, Creativity, and Rest*

April 21, 2026 | \$21.99, 144 pages, casebound | 978-1-5140-1266-6

## #02 Creativity

noun

the use of the imagination or original ideas, especially in the production of an artistic work:

Creativity is a gift from God that expresses identity and individuality. In Genesis 16, after Hagar fled into the desert in her distress and God appeared to her, Hagar called the creator El Roi, “the God who sees me.” Hagar’s name for God poured out from her heart’s creative expression and gave language to their intimate encounter. This is the first time that God, the Creator, is referred to in Scripture creatively as a part of individual intimate expression. God saw her for who she was and met her in her pain. God sees us for who we are also. He sees our humanity, ethnicity, and gender. He sees our individuality, identity, and creativity. If we’re in the wilderness, he knows why we’re there and will meet us where we are. In our case, when God meets us, we may pour out our hearts through art, music, writing, and other creative expressions. By offering our creativity to God, we give back to him what he has given us. In this way, using our creativity to honor God is a form of worship.

Creativity is an expression of intimate thought, marrying our gifts and passions with our past experiences and current ideas. Creativity helps to carry thoughts from ideas to realities and dreams to fruition. It is an artistic expression that originates with a simple concept but ends with a beautiful creation. It is the manifestation of God’s gift of inspiration, freedom of thought, and the courage to try new things. Creativity expresses originality, challenging the conventional and unleashing the imagination. It is the splash of color on a blank canvas, the spark that takes what exists and makes it better, breathing new life into the plain and uninspiring. Creativity adds flavor to life. It is not simply artistry, but it provides solutions to problems with flare and poised balance. Creativity is where innovation and imagination meet to give birth to something new. Our creativity allows us to transform ideas into real works of art. What would life be without creativity?

Creativity is a gear that steadily turns. The more you use it the more oiled it gets. Dr. Maya Angelou said, “You can’t use up creativity. The more you use, the more you have” (*Conversations with Maya Angelou*, edited by Jeffrey M. Elliot, 1989). No matter the creative discipline, we can offer our creativity back to God. We can become a worship leader without a mic, a worshiper equipped with creative acumen whose instrument is a laptop, paintbrush, camera, clay, pen, pencil, or a Conté crayon. No matter the avenue, we can render our services to the glory of God, making our mark one piece at a time. One project at a time. Turning ideas into ideals.

—from chapter two, “Creativity”

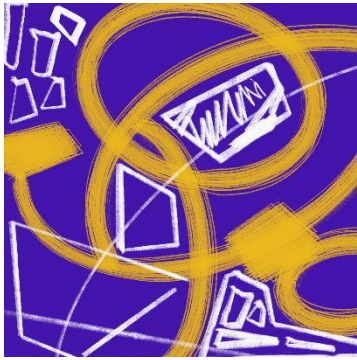


Makayla Payne, print and online publicity  
mpayne@ivpress.com

Krista Clayton, author interviews  
kclayton@ivpress.com



ivpress.com/media



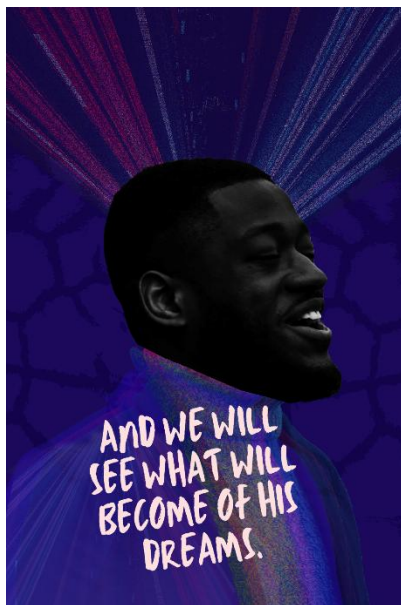
***In the Beginning We Create***  
*Reflections on Collaboration, Creativity, and Rest*

April 21, 2026 | \$21.99, 144 pages, casebound | 978-1-5140-1266-6

## Emulating God's Creative Process

**Briefly summarize the central thesis of *In the Beginning We Create*. What is distinctive about this book?**

**Nathan L. Nicholson:** *In the Beginning We Create* examines and explores God's creative process and how we can emulate his creative process in what he has gifted us to do.



**What piece of art are you most excited to feature in the book and why?**

**Nathan:** This piece *Dreamer* (left) is one of my favorites. I like this piece because of the way that I treated the skin tone. I brought it down to a darker tone to celebrate the uniqueness of black skin. The skin tone and purple bring a subtle but dramatic contrast. I also like this piece because I'm a dreamer. This piece serves as a reminder to the audience to not stop dreaming, even in the face of adversity. And to let the spark of creativity be a shining light to where God is taking them. This is inspired from Genesis 37:20.

**This is a book full of reflections on art. What was your favorite reflection to write and why?**

**Nathan:** Although it is hard to pinpoint one chapter, I would say Workmanship is one of my favorites. This chapter stands out because I examine how we are a thoughtful creation of God. We must remember this in the planning method within our creative process. Here are a few sentences from that section:

"As part of creation, we humans are *his* workmanship. Created by his skilled and ancient hands. Crafted by eternal wisdom. Founded upon the word of his power. When we look at the process of creation, everything else was spoken into existence. 'And God said, "let

there be light.'" 'God said' is used 10 times in the account of creation. But when it comes to Adam, God decided to get his hands dirty. 'And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul' (Genesis 2:7 KJV)."



**Makayla Payne**, print and online publicity  
mpayne@ivpress.com

**Krista Clayton**, author interviews  
kclayton@ivpress.com



Q & A



***In the Beginning We Create***  
*Reflections on Collaboration, Creativity, and Rest*

April 21, 2026 | \$21.99, 144 pages, casebound | 978-1-5140-1266-6

**What are the five main things you want readers to take away from your book?**

**Nathan:**

1. Creation is a godly act, and when we create we are doing something that God has empowered us to do like him.
2. We were made for God's pleasure. What we create should bring us joy. Also, something within the process of our creation should bring us joy.
3. There are patterns that God modeled in creation that are beneficial for healthy creation for us, like collaboration, rest, and reflection
4. Our creative practice should not just be a hobby or something we do when it is convenient, rather it should be a consistent part of our lives.
5. We have a responsibility to speak from our unique point of view as creative expression.



---

**Makayla Payne**, print and online publicity  
mpayne@ivpress.com

**Krista Clayton**, author interviews  
kclayton@ivpress.com



ivpress.com/media



BIO



***In the Beginning We Create***  
*Reflections on Collaboration, Creativity, and Rest*

April 21, 2026 | \$21.99, 144 pages, casebound | 978-1-5140-1266-6

## Nathan L. Nicholson, Creative Director and Artist

*In the Beginning We Create* explores God's timeless patterns of creation as a source of inspiration for our own creative journeys. Nathan L. Nicholson reflects on God's creative process, offering practical insights for how and what we create. Paired with his original artwork, these uplifting reflections will empower you to embrace rhythms of collaboration, creation, and rest.

Nicholson explores how God is the ultimate Creator, and his creative abilities are beyond compare. *In the Beginning We Create* invites you to explore God's creative process and discover how you can emulate his creativity in the creative gifts he has given you. Using the book of Genesis as the foundation, you'll dive into the story of God creating the universe and find inspiration for your own creative journey. If the Creator of the universe took time to rest, the cycle of creation and rest is necessary for our healthy creativity as well.

### Key Features:

- **22 inspiring reflections** that draw from the Genesis creation narrative and other Scripture passages
- **50+ original artworks** by the author thoughtfully included throughout the book
- **Insights for spiritual growth** as you learn how the process of creating connects you with God and has purpose and meaning

Through this book, you'll see how no matter the creative discipline you use, you can offer your creativity back to God, discovering new ways to reflect the Creator's handiwork in your life.

---

**Nathan L. Nicholson** is an artist, award-winning graphic designer, consultant, and creative director based in Chicago. He is an ordained Elder in the Church of God in Christ (COGIC). In 2024, he received the 40 Under 40 COGIC Achievers Award. Nathan is also the founder of NUMA Art, LLC, an independent creative services and communications agency. His art can be purchased through online retailers such as Amazon, Great Big Canvas, Society6, Walmart, and Target.com. His art and articles have been featured in *The Covenant Companion*, the magazine for the Evangelical Covenant Church (ECC). He is married to Praniece and they have two children.

Visit his art page [here](#).



---

**Makayla Payne**, Print and Online Publicity  
mpayne@ivpress.com

**Krista Clayton**, Director of Publicity  
kclayton@ivpress.com



ivpress.com/media