



## ***The Celebration Place***

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Dorena Williamson has a passion for *all* children to hear the message of God's diverse kingdom. She writes children's books that adults need too and is the author of *ColorFull*, *ThoughtFull*, and *GraceFull*. Prior to becoming an author, Dorena enjoyed a career as a social counselor, a worship leader, and a stylist. In 1995, Dorena and her husband, Chris, cofounded Strong Tower Bible Church in Franklin, Tennessee, a multicultural fellowship passionate about biblical justice and God's diverse kingdom.

# Showcasing God's Heart for Oneness

### **Is *The Celebration Place* an ode to anything in particular?**

**Dorena Williamson:** In 1962, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. famously said that, "Eleven o'clock is one of the most segregated hours in Christian America." Fortunately, research indicates that multiracial churches have tripled over the last twenty years! In 1995, I co-planted the multiracial Strong Tower Bible Church with my husband, Chris. This is a lived experience for me, going into my twenty-fifth year as first lady of Strong Tower Bible Church.

I wrote this book to give a visual manifestation of what it looks like when we all get together in the house of the Lord. Many approach diversity theoretically today, but this is practical, on-the-ground reality for me and many others. *The Celebration Place* is an ode to the joy I experience each week with my beautiful church family.

### **In your view, what makes this book so uplifting for kids?**

**Dorena:** Featuring various styles of worship, honoring cultures and abilities, this uplifting story showcases God's heart for Oneness and how that is manifested in celebratory worship—a taste of glory divine for young hearts and minds!

It takes intentionality to invite people to the table who have not always had a place: indigenous worship, disability with a wheelchair-bound congregant, rap, and varied instruments—all these important cultural and personal elements bring such richness and beauty to our church experiences!

### **What lessons are taught within the pages of this book?**

**Dorena Williamson:** Within the pages of this book, kids have the opportunity to learn that:

- Every human bears the image of God.
- Unity in diversity was God's idea and is possible through humility and intentionality.
- An appreciation for diversity of worship style and cultural expression is important.
- Church is a welcoming place for all kinds of people.
- God's kingdom can be experienced on earth AS IT IS IN HEAVEN!



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