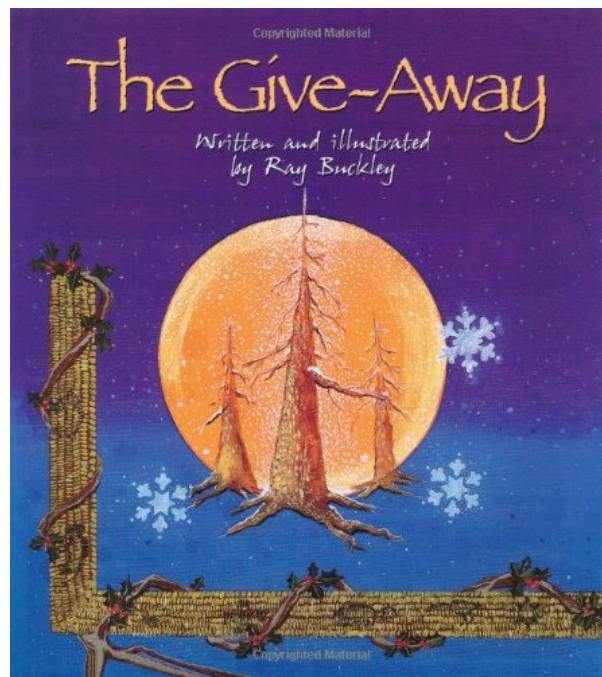
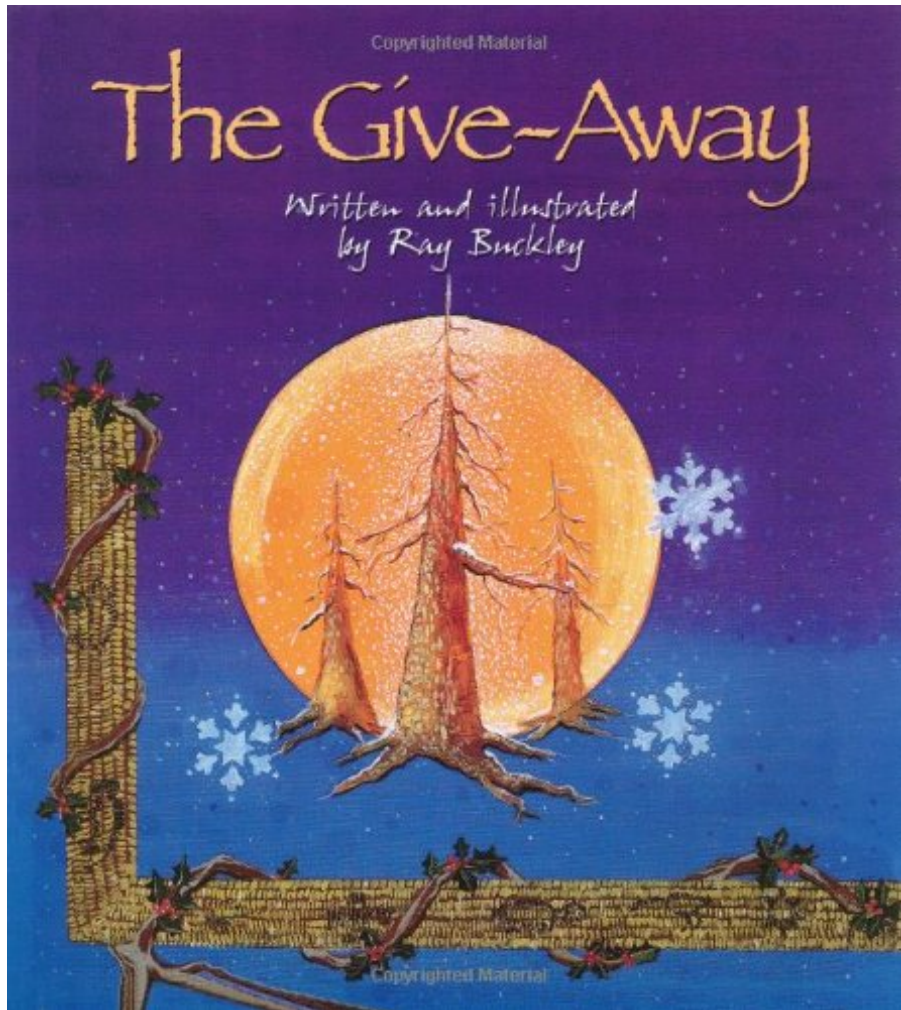


THE GIVE-AWAY: A CHRISTMAS STORY IN THE NATIVE AMERICAN TRADITION BY RAY BUCKLEY



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About the Author

Ray Buckley is the interim Director of the Center for Native American Spirituality and Christian Study. Buckley has served The United Methodist Church as a staff member of The United Methodist Publishing House, Director of the Native People's Communication Office (UMCom) for nine years, and Director of Connectional Ministries for the Alaska Missionary Conference.

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The Native American tradition of the give-away takes a new form in this engaging dialogue between the Whooping Crane, the Snow Goose, Old Beaver, Grandmother Turtle, the Wind, the Ancient One, and the Creator as well as others. Children of all ages will learn that giving is more than just gifting; it is denying oneself so that another may have a better way.

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- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: .39" h x 8.26" w x 9.32" l, .63 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 32 pages

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Most helpful customer reviews

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Wonderful story

By Amazon Customer

Such a great story and the artwork is beautiful. I read this to the congregation at the Christmas Eve service. It opens the reader up to a different perspective on the typical birth narrative stories. Highly recommend.

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful.

Great book used in religious education class

By Elizabeth A. Kuhn

Both the illustrations and the story are wonderful. The book artfully combines Native American spirituality aspects with Christian aspects. I used this book in a "children's church" class at our Native American / Catholic church at Christmas. The kids loved the story and afterwards made a collage of Jesus in the manger surrounded by all the animals mentioned in the story. The book could be used during Easter as well or during a discussion about Native American give-aways.

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful.

Combining Native American spirituality with Christianity

By Laura

This Christmas picture book is a powerful telling of God's plan for the birth of Jesus. The story is told as a folktale and based on the Native American tradition of give-aways. In this story, the oldest and wisest of every walking and flying animal gather in the oldest forest to discuss the state of humanity. They recognize how humans have forgotten their connections with God, each other, the animals, and the Earth. Then, the wise turtle proclaims that she will give of herself - her shell - and in her giving, she hopes that humans will be reminded of who they are in connection with all creation. The other animals follow her lead and offer to give the "most costly portion of themselves."

But then, God, called "the Creator," appears and warns the animals that the humans will not know that the animals have given these gifts. Instead, the humans will believe that they have taken from creation as demonstration of their power. The Creator offers the solution: He must give himself away. The Creator says, "I must choose to become small, so that they can choose to know me large." The Creator then explains that he will come to Earth as a baby bringing light, hope, and love. The story really shows its power at the end when the oldest tree asks how it can give to this baby, and the Creator answers that the tree will be his support and place of rest at the beginning and the end. The final page reads that the oldest tree wept, "partly for joy and partly for sorrow," as many of us may feel at the news of Jesus' birth and death.

This story gives some insight into the purpose of Jesus' life - to reconnect humanity to God and all of his creation. It shows how all of creation supports each other and God designed us to work in harmony together. It also depicts Jesus as God's gift to us and communicates the greatness of His sacrifice. The ultimate themes are giving and connection, two beautiful and important lessons for children and adults.

Buckley is a Native American and has worked for good relations with the Native American community and the United Methodist Church in many capacities including interim Director of the Center for Native American Spirituality and Christian Study. There are strong Native American elements in this story that deftly combine the emphasis on the oneness of creation with the reverence for God and Jesus. As Buckley

explains in the introduction, the animals are illustrated with red on their faces as a sign of hospitality and friendliness. The story itself is based on the Native American tradition of giving away possessions or sacrificing oneself for the community. Children in mixed and Native American communities will learn a great deal about the relationship between Native American spirituality and Christianity.

Consider reading or performing *The Give-Away* along with a giving event during the Christmas season. The message of the story is for all and would be a great addition to a family or intergenerational event.

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