

SEPTEMBER 2017

SCGN SCOOPS MAGAZINE



GOODMAN REVIVAL! *Revive us again!*

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OUR MISSION

SGNScoops exists to promote the gospel by unveiling what is intriguing and real about Southern Gospel and Christian Country music. With integrity, we aspire to strengthen Christians, highlight people who are fulfilling a call to minister and emphasize the music that inspires audiences and glorifies God.

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PUBLISHER'S POINT

by Rob Patz

Welcome to the September edition of the Publisher's Point. I hope everyone had a fantastic summer. Of course, September means we are drawing to the end of the great weather. I have to admit that fall is my favorite time of year, partially because my birthday falls in the fall ... September to be exact. That's what we're going to talk about this month in the Publisher's Point. No, not my birthday, though if you want to send birthday cards or gifts, get in contact with me, and I will give you my address ... just kidding.

I have been thinking a lot lately about how amazing God is. Not only does He know us before we were even formed in our mother's womb, but He selected a date for us to enter this world. How amazing is that, that the Creator of the universe thought enough about me to select a date for me to be born and a set of parents for me. If you really think about it, it is pretty incredible.

I know all of us at times struggle with feeling important, or wanted, or special, but if you look at this one point in our existence, how God orchestrated everything in the universe to coincide with our birth, how cool is that to think He loved us so much that He planned the date of our arrival? So, not only does He care for us enough to plan the date of arrival, but He has a plan for our daily life if we are sincere and ask Him for direction.

I also think about the fact that God planned the arrival of His Son. He knew the beginning, He knew the end, and He knew the reason for both. Not unlike His plan for Jesus, He has a plan for your life. He knew your beginning. He knows your middle, and He knows your end. Think of how amazing that is, that the God of the universe, who loves us so much, has planned the date of our birth and planned our life. He has a desire for you to fill His great plan.

So many friends of mine will tell me, "well, I can't share the gospel," or, "I can't be a soul winner, because I have a full-time job." There's nothing further from the truth. We all have opportunities daily to live out our faith.



Recently, I heard a story from Jesse Duplantis about how he witnessed to a gentleman at the gas station, and the entire conversation started because of his boots. Let that sink in for a minute. Jesse won this man to Christ by the boots he wore. You stop and think today about what it is that you have in your life that you can use to win others to Christ. Not all of us are going to preach from the stage. Not all of us are going to sing a song that will change someone's life. Sometime, in the most unusual place, you can be Jesus to someone.

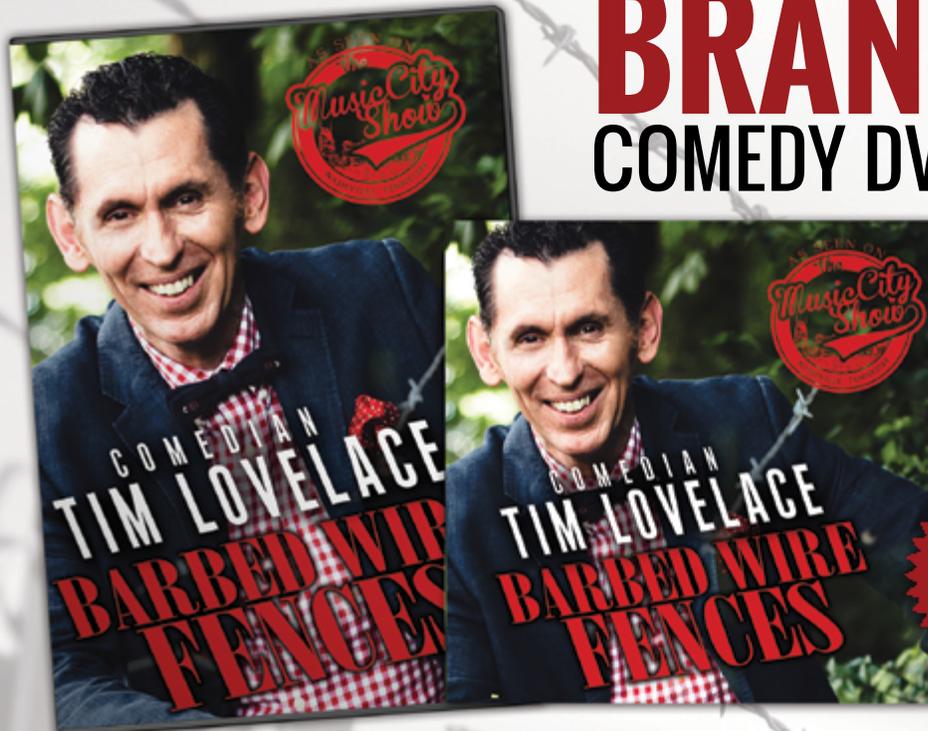
So, as I celebrate my birthday month, I feel a sense of peace about my relationship with Jesus, knowing that He loves me so much that He had a plan from the very day that I was born, to this very minute as I write this to you.

I know you might be struggling today with loneliness. You might be struggling with feeling unloved, or you might be struggling with a direction in your life. However, I want to tell you this ... instead of looking at the problems that you see, put your focus on what Jesus says in the Bible, in Jeremiah 29:11, "for I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." (NIV)

Just reading that encourages me. I hope it encourages you.

Join me in October for Creekside as I truly believe this is going to be the best year ever. Creekside Gospel Music Convention is being held in Pigeon Forge, Tenn., from Oct. 30 through Nov. 2 at the Smoky Mountain Convention Center. For more information, check out the Creekside update in this month's edition.

Until next month, this has been the Publisher's Point.



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singingnews



By Lorraine Walker

Creekside Gospel Music Convention 2017 is quickly approaching. Artists and fans are preparing to descend on Pigeon Forge, Tenn., Smoky Mountain Convention Center from Oct. 30 - Nov. 2. Those who haven't already booked their rooms are urged to reserve them today. Please call Creekside owner Rob Patz at 360-933-0741. Convention tickets are free but must be reserved at creeksidegospelmusicconvention.com.

Creekside is hosting several great artists and events. Highlighting this year's schedule are some of the best trios and quartets in Southern Gospel:

Brian Free and Assurance: This trio led by the unmistakable tenor voice of Brian Free, has been awarded and nominated often. A favorite of many, their latest Dove Award song, "Say Amen" has brought even more recognition. BFA is among the list of Top Five Diamond Award nominees for 2017.



Browders: This family has been growing in popularity over the last few years. Original songs and country vocals, along with members that love their audience, combine to produce a fantastic group of artists.

Hyssongs: The Hyssong family has seen their last few radio releases climb to the top of Gospel charts, including their latest hit, "Let the Hallelujahs Ring." Engaging and down to earth, this family is a favorite wherever they present their three-part harmony.

Mark209: This Christian Country group has combined their distinctive harmony, style and humor to produce a sound that is welcomed from Elvis Week to Gospel Music Today. The quartet is a favorite at Creekside, and the emcee abilities of member Nate Justice always bring the audience to life.

Nelons: Kelly Nelon Clark is a legend in Southern Gospel, having performed on stage since the late 1970s. Her family joins her now to produce a sound as unique and identifiable as the Nelon name has always been. The Nelons are also Top Five Diamond award nominees.

Pine Ridge Boys: Since 1963, this traditional quartet has been gracing Gospel music stages with their seasoned vocals. Larry Stewart, Wayne Shuford, Ivory Luke and Steven Craps return to Creekside, one of their most appreciative audiences.

Soul'd Out: For more than a decade, this quartet has been bringing encouragement as well as evangelism to their listeners. Matt Rankin, owner of the group, has



now added a four-member band, joining a growing number of Gospel music artists who travel with live music.

More Gospel Music artists: Also appearing will be the **Sneed Family, Eagle's Wings, the Williamsons, the Bates Family, Jason Runnels, Hope's Journey, the Shireys, Day 3, the Drummond Family, the Connells, the Chordsmen, the Berry Brothers and Steve Bridgmon** in addition to **Gospel Music Today** and many more.



Eric Bennett: Bennett is the original bass singer with the ever popular Triumphant quartet, a former pastor and a family man. Bennett comments, "One of the highest achievements is to be honored by your peers. I am truly honored to receive the Life Achievement Award from the SGNScoops Magazine."

Dr. Jerry and Jan Goff: This beloved couple will be returning to Creekside for the entire convention. Goff will present a Life Achievement Award from SGN-Scoops Magazine in a special service on Oct. 30. The pair will also host the 2017 Diamond Awards.

David Ring: Motivational speaker David Ring brings his presentation of resilience and hope during the



evening concerts on Monday, Oct. 30, and Wednesday, Nov. 1.

Pat Barker: This popular bass vocalist, who has been a part of the Mark Trammell Quartet, Second Half Quartet and the Guardians – will be there to lead the Pat Barker University, offering training from vocal coaching to stage presence. The PBU is available to artists and attendees for a nominal cost on a first-come, first-served basis. Please call Patz at 360-933-0741 or Vonda Easley at 256-310-7892 to reserve your seat today. The fee is \$25 per person.

Red Back Hymnal Mass Choir: The Board Of Directors of Creekside Gospel Music Convention have once again invited Charlie Sexton – along with his co-hosts, Troy and Tammy Burns – to present the ever-popular Red Back Revival. All of the artists at Creekside will gather on the stage to form a mass choir, singing from this time-honored songbook.

2017 Diamond Awards: Voting for the 2017 Diamond Awards Top 5 is now open at sgnscoops.com. Fans, friends, artists and industry personnel are all invited to vote and to encourage their supporters to vote as well.



To vote, visit sgnscoops.com/2017-diamond-awards.

The 2017 Diamond Awards will be held on Oct. 31, with Dr. Jerry and Jan Goff as guest hosts. The awards ceremony is a unique evening of recognizing the best in Gospel music.



sgnscoops.com for more information.

Creekside Events: The Convention will begin on Monday with an open-air event and breakfast. Veterans will be honored with a free meal that morning. Showcases are held daily, and midnight prayer follows each evening concert. There will be a special breakfast with the Pine Ridge Boys on Wednesday and more events to be announced.



Creekside Gospel Music Convention 2017 tickets can be reserved by visiting creeksidegospelmusicconvention.com. For more information on tickets, lodging and special VIP tickets, contact Patz at 360-933-0741.



VIP Bracelets: These special bracelets will provide entry into the preferred seating section at each event. Wearers will also receive a Creekside gift bag and be the special guest at select backstage happenings. VIP bracelets can still be obtained from Creekside assistant, Vonda Easley, by calling 256-310-7892 or by e-mailing at vonda@sgnscoops.com.

Volunteering: Creekside organizers are always looking for volunteers to help spread the news on social media, be an extra hand during the event, and also praying that this will be more than just an event. Pray for all attending that God will turn this week into an incredible experience. Contact Easley by e-mailing at vonda@



HOPE TO THE HILL

By Nathan Kistler



Someone asked me just recently about the ministry in Washington, D. C. They asked if I loved D.C. or my singing career more. That was a no-brainer for me, as I love with all I am the ministry in Washington, D.C. There is nothing I enjoy more than serving those who serve us. Their last question was the one that hit me. “It is successful,” they asked. I thought long and hard about that for a few days.

What is the measure of success in ministry? By worldly business standards, it is no success at all as it brings no monetary return or really any relationship capital. It reminded me that people think in this business mindset when contemplating ministry success, and it cannot be set in this rudimentary place. I am afraid that we all lose sight at some point or another of the spiritual capital or the treasures we lay up in Heaven. By earthly standards, I have failed many times and



miserably. Without the aid of God, I could not do anything. Yet, isn't that what it is all about?

Isn't it about weak individuals who rely on God for their strength and wisdom? The Bible says in Luke 15:10, “Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.” I read this and was reminded that even if I only had the privilege of sharing the Gospel with one during the entirety of my career here in Washington that it would be worth it all.

Now that being said, God has given me the opportunity over and over again, hundreds of times just this year alone to share the Good News, and for that, I am truly grateful. That to me is success of the highest order, and it has nothing to do



with me. It is all about Him.

People who support our ministry must understand that the greatest gift that I could ever give to a member of Congress, Supreme Court Justice, or someone within the White House is anonymity. In return, the greatest gift they could ever give me is their trust, and I will guard that with my life. The point is that most of the wonderful things God has done and will do can never be shared in a public setting such as this one, but as they say, "if walls could talk."

So, what many may not view on the surface as success, I view as God's providential leading here in Washington. For those of you who support our ministry here, thank you. You will never know what that means and how your gifts have helped us continue the work. Your continued support is vital for the daily work that must be done. If you want to know more about our work, visit our web site or give me a call. I am always ready to talk with you. May God continue to bless you and keep you.

Your friend in Washington,
Nathan Kistler, www.hopetothehill.com, www.nathankistler.com



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Goodman Revival Takin' 'em back



By Craig Harris

Goodman Revival stays close to its roots and continues to build momentum as its sophomore release is unveiled

Goodman Revival had nothing in the beginning. In fact, Goodman Revival was really nothing in the beginning. The trio had no plans, no expectations ... in fact, it had no name.

Being an untitled ensemble left promoter Frank Arnold in a tough spot as the group prepared to take the stage for its first “official” date at the Mabee Center in Tulsa, Okla.

“Frank said, ‘what do I call y’all,’” Johnny Minick recalls.

Tanya Goodman Sykes adds, “I don’t remember what he called us, but we had a good time.”

Michael Sykes – Tanya’s husband – is the third member of what is now Goodman Revival. Tanya is the daughter of Rusty Goodman, and she began her career performing with her father, her aunt Vestal and her uncle Howard as part of the iconic Southern Gospel group, the Happy

Goodmans. After a few years away from performing, Tanya returned to the stage to perform with her father as part of Goodman Family Band, and Michael was hired to play piano with that ensemble in 1982. The two were married a year later.

Johnny’s first stint with the Happy Goodmans came in the 1970s as the pianist, and he later returned to complete the trio along with Howard and Vestal for the final 10 years of the group’s existence.

“We don’t try to be the original (Goodmans),” Michael points out. “We just try to pay tribute to their music.”

Tanya adds, “The response was kind of overwhelming to us. We felt like we could go either way, that people could be not accepting ... like, how dare you mess with this. Part of the reason people have been receptive is that we’ve made it clear that we’re not trying to be the Happy Goodman family. We’re not trying to step in their shoes or take their place. We’re trying to honor that music with a lot of respect and love. People have been extremely supportive. Our peers have been extremely supportive.”

That support was overwhelming from the start, which was innocently born when the three friends decided to sing the Rusty-penned song “Until You’ve Known the Love of God” on a Sunday morning in 2012 at the church Johnny pastored (River of Life in Smyrna, Tenn.).



“We thought it was one time,” Tanya says. “We thought it would be great to sing this music. Then, people started calling.”

The comfortability level between the three has made it an easy transition into a rapidly-growing music ministry.

“We wouldn’t have thought to put this together,” Johnny admits. “God had to do it.”

“I couldn’t think of three people that would be more comfortable together. We’ve been family for a long time.”

Tanya adds, “We have a large amount of shared life experience. Johnny and I have been on the road together a lot down through the years. Michael and I have been on the road together a lot down through the years. I remember when Johnny and Sherry got married and when Aaron (Minick, son of Johnny and Sherry) was born ... and Aaron is 40. We just go back a long way. Johnny has been around ministry his entire life. Michael has been around ministry his entire life. His granddad was a pastor. A lot of our life is the same. A large portion of our frame of reference is the same.”

However, it’s more than just familiarity and comfortability

... likability is a significant part of their dynamic as well. “We’re having a ball,” Michael emphasizes. “We go to Johnny’s house and sing together and magic happens. The chemistry is right. We do know each other. We’re family. And when we sing together, it brings forth some kind of emotion ... laughter, sometimes tears.”

Johnny adds, “When I hear Tanya sing, it stirs my soul, because I know where her feet have been.”

The Goodman Revival ministry grew significantly with the 2015 release of Gaither Music Group’s DVD project, “Goodman Revival: Songs in the Key of Happy.”

“When we got in the studio and started recording (the debut CD, also entitled “Songs in the Key of Happy”), it was kind of our custom project,” Michael says. “(President of Gaither Music Group) Barry Jennings said, ‘can I listen to it?’ I thought, ‘ah, he’s just being nice.’ He listened to the first three songs and said, ‘I think we can do something with this.’”

The video’s filming went better than anticipated. It reached the No. 3 position on the Billboard music video sales chart.

“When we did the video, we had never stood on stage and sang some of those songs,” Michael explains. “Surreal is the word ... it was a magical thing.”

Johnny adds, “When that hit, then promoters started calling. It’s all amazing to us. We don’t take any of the credit for this. God is in control. We’ve committed to let God be at the wheel. Wherever he takes us, that’s where we’re





going.”

They’re going to more and more places now despite their other responsibilities. Michael is a studio producer who has recently worked on projects for a variety of artists – including the Hoppers and Gold City – and he is working on a best of Ponder, Sykes and Wright project as well (a trio he performed with along with David Ponder and Woody Wright). Tanya has a full-time job, and Johnny remains on staff at River of Life.

Tanya had a scare last year when she was diagnosed with a low grade form of appendix cancer, and though she had major surgery that left her flat on her back in bed for an eight-week period, she did not have to undergo chemotherapy or radiation treatments.

“I remember my dad saying when he first got sick (with cancer in 1986), they told him it was already in his spine,” Tanya recalls. “It was not a good prognosis. I remember him saying early on that his greatest desire was that his dream was that his music would outlive him. We love that we can help manifest part of that.

“One thing that I think is really neat is that he wrote ‘Who Am I’ in 1965, and if I’m not mistaken, in (2012), Jason Crabb had recorded ‘Who Am I,’ and it was nominated for song of the year at the Dove Awards. It was a song that was (almost) 40 years old at the time. That was really neat.”

Despite it being older songs delivered by veteran performers, Goodman Revival’s music possesses an energy in its live performances. The trio attributes some of that to the band it travels with, a group that includes drummer Eddy Bell, steel guitar player Doug Jernigan and bass guitarist Landy Ewing. They are accompanied by sound

technicians Steve Allen and Brian Ledford, and Johnny’s wife Sherry also travels with the group and assists at the product table.

“The Band is great,” Tanya points out. “They’re super supportive. They’re always excited at what we’re doing.”

Michael adds, “We feed off the energy of a band.”

Goodman Revival’s sophomore release on the Gaither Music Group label – “Still Happy” – was unveiled on Aug. 25.

“We didn’t have an identity the first time,” Johnny says of the group’s first project.

Michael adds, “We’re finding out who we are now.”

Michael, Tanya and Johnny served as the producers on the 11-song project. It includes familiar Goodmans tunes such as “When They Ring the Bells of Heaven,” “The Answer’s on the Way,” “The Lighthouse,” “Had It Not Been,” “I’m Too Near Home,” and “The Eastern Gate.” “Knowing You’ll Be There” – which Michael wrote along with Suzanne Gaither Jennings – is another of the songs,



as is Johnny’s song that he wrote with Tim Hill, “Dying to Tell You I Love You.”

“These songs hold special meanings and memories to us,” Tanya points out. “I’m very excited about (“Still Happy”). I like this one a little better than the first one.”

One of the group’s biggest goals is simply to minister to

its audiences.

“Dan Rather was interviewing Emmylou Harris, and some of the things she said really resonated with us,” Tanya shares. “It opened up discussion with Michael and me. He said, when he was in his early 20s, I wanted to be good at what I did, but he wanted to be the coolest. Now, I just want it to connect. I want that connection. I want people to know that there is hope. When we sing ‘Look for Me,’ I want those people to feel that comfort.

“I see people in the audience every night weeping. I know they’re thinking about somebody who is no longer here by their side. It’s that heart connection ... forget about (a calling). I think that’s important for all of us to just connect. I

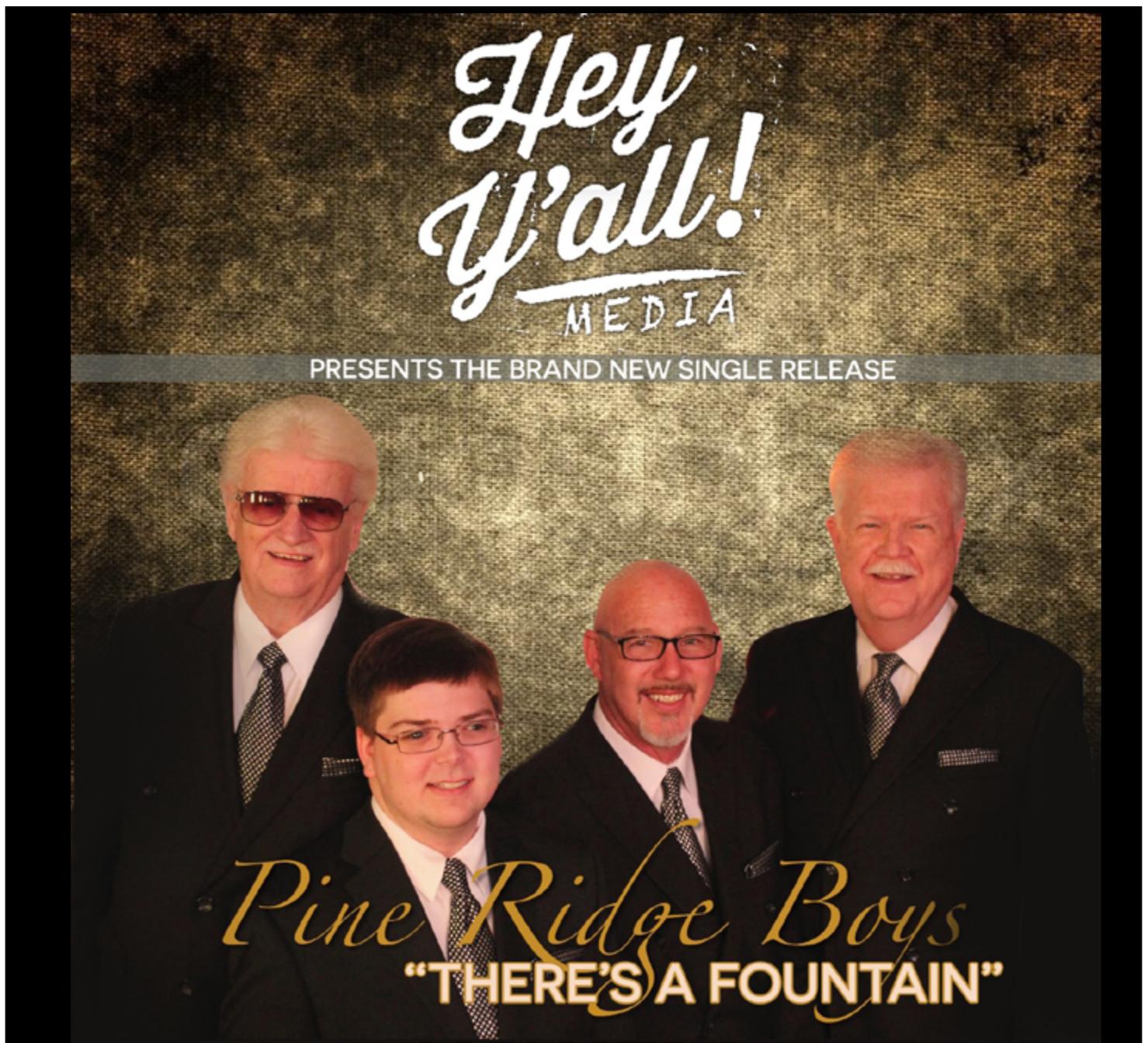
want them to leave with hope or peace or encouragement that they didn’t have when they got here.”

Johnny adds, “You never know what that connection might be. It might be someone who just needs to laugh.”

Five years after its birth, the trio definitely has something now ... most recognizably, a name.

“I kind of liked the name Goodman Revival, because the style of the music is kind of like revival music,” Tanya says.

Michael adds, “We’ve been given a gift that we didn’t see coming.”





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DJ SPOTLIGHT

Chuck Bryant



By Vonda Easley

Chuck Bryant, owner of WOTG in Clearwater, Fla., is in our DJ Spotlight this month. WOTG is the only Gospel station on the west coast of Florida and in Southwest Florida.



Here's a piece of our conversation. Enjoy.

Vonda Easley:
Can you tell us how long you have been in radio and how things started

for you and WOTG?

Chuck Bryant: I started working at a local radio station in the Tampa Bay area in April of 2014. I enjoyed radio so much that I became interested in starting my own station. In January of 2015, WOTG was launched.

Easley: How do you think Southern Gospel music has changed over the years musically and stylistically?

Bryant: I feel in a lot of ways it has changed for the better. With the use of computerized recording and being able to use more digital sound, the music is much clearer and a better quality. Most groups have kept the Southern Gospel tradition and style, and because of that, it has opened up the door for their music to cross over into other genres such as Christian Country.

Easley: Being a Florida station, do you feel you have the ideal spot geographically? Everyone loves Florida.

Bryant: Well, we are the only Gospel station on the west coast of Florida and in Southwest Florida. Because we are an internet station and have several other stations around the country, we feel we do a great job of getting the music out to the people. So, we are not only reaching Florida. We are reaching folks around the globe. Our people in Florida do love good ole' Gospel Music though.



Easley:
Who have you heard lately that you think is the next big thing in Gospel Music?

Bryant: For me to put a label on anyone of our groups is a hard thing to

do. We try our best to play our regional groups and our national groups who sing Southern Gospel, Bluegrass Gospel and Country Gospel. Many of these groups are like family to us, and we love all their music and love working with them to get their message in song heard by the people.



Easley: Internet Radio is reaching the masses. How has technology changed the way you play music? Bryant: Unlike the days of the turntable and cueing records, now, most of the

music is downloaded to a computer. Playlists are set up and managed by a station manager. Technology has changed things for the better as long as everything is up and working. It amazes me the thousands and even millions of people that can listen to our stations just at the click of a button.

We hope you join the thousands listening in to WOTG in Clearwater, Fla. Enjoy Chuck every week day on www.wotgradio.com on the Morning Show with Chuck and George at 9:30 a.m. (EST).

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YOUNGER PERSPECTIVE

Rebecca Burke

of The Littles

BY ERIN STEVENS

A word from Erin Stevens...

Today, we bring our attention to singer, wife, mom, and all around girly girl in the form of the lovely Rebecca Little Burke. In this interview, she lets us know more about her years of growing up, what new doors the Lord is opening for her family group – the Littles – and what it’s like to have her bouncy baby boy on the road with her. In the midst of the craziness, somehow she fit us into her schedule.

Erin Stevens: How would you describe your years of growing up in a musical home? Where did it all begin for you?

Rebecca Burke: We were just like most other musical families, where music was a huge part of our DNA growing up. It may come as a surprise, though, that we did not sing together as a family until I was 17, and we formed our trio.

My earliest memories of music are of my parents singing in church, me singing in the children’s choir, and my family gathering around the piano at grandma’s. I always love to tell folks that before becoming a Christian, my dad played the bass guitar in a top 40s band in the 1970s, and he wrote a beach music song that we have on a little 45 vinyl album (record). When I was a little girl, I would blast it in our house and dance around. My dad was a star to me.

But believe it or not, even though I sang in church growing up, most of my friends didn’t even know I could sing. I would come home from school and go to my room, where I would spend hours singing along to my favorite female artists. I had dreams of singing one day, but it was one of those chance-of-a-lifetime, you-better-have-a-real-job-to-fall-back-on kind of things. So, while I loved to sing with everything in me, I made other plans to go into the medical field. I was in band but not chorus or anything like that. It wasn’t until graduation day at my high school that I sang for the first time in front of my entire graduating class. And for the curious

ones, I sang “I Hope You Dance” by LeeAnn Womack.

Stevens: What are some exciting things folks can be expecting from The Littles still to come this year?

Burke: The Littles have been anticipating this year for quite some time. We just released a brand new CD entitled, “Back to The Well,” produced by our friend, Gerald Wolfe. We are also excited to announce that it is our first project under the Song Garden Music Group record label. This CD has been a long time coming, and honestly, met every expectation of our hearts. We prayed over this project many days and feel that the Lord was in every detail from beginning to end, with songs like, “Ten Thousand Years,” “Keep Coming Back To The Well,” and the old Happy Goodmans song “Sweetest Song I Know,” as well as our current radio release, “A Whole Lot of Heaven in the House.” Honestly, I don’t think there’s a single song on the entire CD I don’t love, and that’s rare. Folks can learn more about it at our website, www.thelittlesmusic.com.

Stevens: On a “keeping up with the Burkes” note, what’s it like being a wife and mommy on the road?





Burke: Exhausting, my, oh my. I am so fortunate to be married to a man that literally loves Gospel Music (and probably more than I do). He's able to travel with me some and is one of the most vital parts of my ministry. Then there's my sweet little 15-month-old Jackson who is so curious about the world and does not stop. He loves being on the road though, and as tiring as it can be, when he grabs the mic and says, "check check" or starts getting his groove on to mommy singing ... well, I wouldn't trade it for anything.

Stevens: Tell us more about Jackson. Is motherhood what you thought it would be, or has it surprised you along the way?

Burke: Jackson is one of the greatest adventures I have ever been on. He was a big boy from the start (weighing 10 pounds, 15 ounces at birth), and so it was a rough beginning to motherhood for me. I remember texting my girlfriends and just saying, "hey, no one told me that this would be so hard." I still have those days. But, then, there are those moments where he makes me laugh or learns something new, and my heart swells with pride. He is his own person, and I think the most wonderful and scary part of it all is that God entrusted him to me. Wait ... what? Sometimes it's like, "God, are you sure you meant to give him to ... me ... me, as in, this gal who is a serious mess most days. You want me to care for this sweet baby?" But knowing that God doesn't make mistakes, and He gives us the wisdom and grace – oh the grace that's needed – to be parents each and every day, brings peace and comfort and helps me to remember to enjoy each and every moment. It goes by so fast.

Stevens: Amazon or eBay?

High heels or flats?

Homemade or take out?

Pinterest recipes or Food Network?

Early riser or night owl?

Date night out or Netflix marathon in?

Burke: Amazon.

Flats. (Although I do love a nice pair of heels)

Take out.

Pinterest.

Night owl for sure. (I'll let y'all ask my husband about waking me up early.)

Date night out.

Stevens: How would you encourage women of all ages who may be struggling in their faith as they deal with work, marriage or family? How would you point them towards their Heavenly Father?

Burke: The greatest piece of advice I was given was to worship God through our everyday tasks. If you're like me, I feel awesome on the days where I have checked off my to-do lists ... cleaned house, cooked dinner, baby's happy, quiet time spent with the Lord, etc. The lists never end, but on those rare days where it all just comes together, I feel great. But let's all be honest and admit those days are so few and far between, and most days, when I finally lay my head down at night, I am exhausted and can only think through the failures of my day, those moments when I lost my cool or the fact that I didn't read a single verse in my Bible before going to sleep. But the reality is, God is in each and every task, and we can spend time with Him while we are giving babies a bath or sweeping the kitchen for the third time in a day. Just worship Him in the small things, spend time loving Him, and read His Word as often as you can. Write it on sticky notes and place it in your house. In a perfect world, we would all get up at 5 a. m. and spend an hour with the Lord before the day gets started. But this life gets busy, and it's hard to find five uninterrupted minutes. So, seeing God in the day-to-day tasks, and enjoying intimacy with Him wherever we are, is so important.

Closing thoughts from Erin Stevens...

I believe God often allows our lives to be hectic, just so we will learn the discipline of tuning in to hear His voice in the midst of it all. If it was quiet all the time, we may take His voice for granted. But it's in the noisiness of life that we have to will ourselves to listen closely. As Burke stated, don't beat yourself up if all the tasks of the day didn't get accomplished. If the name of Jesus is ever present on our lips, then He is near and we can face any circumstance with an unwavering confidence.

And that's my take on it.

Until next month, Scoops fans.

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Freedom Singers: The Price of Freedom

By Derek Simonis

Today, we often take the word freedom for granted. In the western world, freedom and especially religious liberty are something that we are simply accustomed to with little thought given to the price paid by others to attain it. Perhaps our hearts are stirred to the remembrance of its cost around national holidays and observances, but for the most part, we fail to consider as we ought how truly precious freedom is.

Simon and Stefan Ivascu have a much different perspective. Born in Romania during a time of great religious persecution, freedom was something of which they could only dream. Along with their friend Wesley Pop, Simon and Stefan fled Romania when they were only teenagers. In Romania, their native land, at that time, all young men, upon completing high school, were forced to join the army. Being conscientious Christians, they could not join the army because freedom of worship was totally restricted. Refusing to

join would result in several years of imprisonment and persecution.

Determined to escape to freedom, they faced great hardships fleeing Romania. Simon and Wesley's nightmare, however, truly began when they crawled into a shipping container and were sealed inside. There they spent two weeks in complete darkness. Before even being loaded on to the ship, the container they were in baked in the heat for several days. Finally, they were placed aboard a container vessel which was bound for an unknown destination. The young men ran out of food, water and hope. As despair filled that container, it appeared that the container would be their tomb. However, God had another plan for the men. He miraculously rescued them, and brought them to Canada where they were granted their freedom.

These brothers have been singing since shortly after



fleeing Romania.

“We were singing mostly hymns together, but we started to sing Southern Gospel music in 2000, after we heard the Gaithers and the Cathedrals on television,” Simon recalls. “It was a sound that we instantly fell in love with. After singing at local churches and telling our story, it was suggested to actually give our group a name, the Freedom Singers. This would be the most appropriate name considering the backgrounds of the guys. So, in 2001, the Freedom Singers was officially born.”

Today, the Freedom Singers continue on singing the same music that means so much to them. Although the group configuration has changed, Simon continues to lead the group with the same message and ministry focus that they began with more than 15 years ago. In 2014, Jake Losen joined the Freedom Singers.

Then, in early 2017, Stefan came off the road to be at home with his family, and Doug Wiley joined the group.

“Even though my brother is not on the road with me,

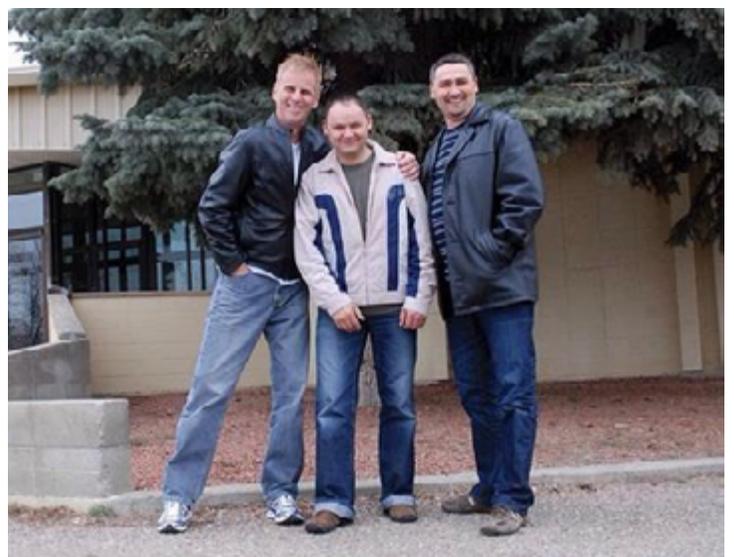


he will always be a Freedom Singer,” Simon points out. “However, I’m blessed to have next to me two fantastic vocalists and amazing men of God. With the new guys, the sound of the Freedom Singers is completely redefined.

“We’ve been blessed beyond our imagination in so many ways, from the opportunity of sharing our music and testimony in churches big and small, to performing at the largest annual Canadian Gospel Convention in Red Deer and doing radio and TV interviews to being a guest artist on a Christian music cruise.”



The coming year brings even more exciting opportunities to the Freedom Singers as they are scheduled to travel across the United States and Canada.



If you would like to learn more about the story of the Ivascu brothers, visit the Freedom Singers web site at freedom Singers.com. One of the resources available there is a book entitled “The Price of Freedom,” which details the physical and spiritual journey of Simon, Stefan, and Wesley from Romania to Canada.

The Freedom Singers' ministry purpose is to share their music and testimony in the hope that those who listen will be spiritually enriched and blessed.



“We give praise to God for His guidance and abundant grace,” Simon adds.

With such an incredible story of deliverance from oppression, there can be no doubt that this ministry understands and appreciates physical and spiritual freedom. All can learn from the example and testimony of the Ivascu brothers and the Freedom Singers as we remember the price of freedom.

A promotional graphic for Dennise Nichole Dittman. At the top, her name "DENNISE NICHOLE DITTMAN" is written in a serif font. Below is a portrait of her with blonde, wavy hair, wearing a gold lace top and a necklace. The name "Dennise Nichole Dittman" is written in a sans-serif font below the portrait. To the left of the text is a Facebook icon, and to the right is a Twitter icon. Below the icons, the text reads: "Booking: 513-560-6715", "'LIKE' me on Facebook", "www.facebook.com/DenniseNicholeDittman", "'FOLLOW' me on Twitter - @Dennise_Dittman", and "DENNISENICHOLEDITTMAN.NET" at the bottom. The background features a repeating pattern of stylized hands.

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Randall Reviews It - September 2017

by Randall Hamm

Friends, it's already September, and fall will soon be around the corner. How did that happen? I know you are thinking, "well Randall, you see the earth is round and rotates..." ... nevermind, ask a silly question.

Well friends, what I do know is I have three great CDs that I've reviewed and that I think you'll love. Two are artists you may not be familiar with, the Kendricks of Alabama and Cheri Taylor of Indiana, and then I review a follow-up CD that was 10 years in the making, from Susan Whisnant.

All in all, it is a great batch of music. As always, get a copy of these projects where ever you get good Gospel music.

Now, on with the reviews.
Randall



The Kendricks

"Just For You"

Producer: Scott Barnett

2016 Independent

Songs: "Two Room Schoolhouse" (Johnny Kendrick BMI); "Country Road" (Johnny Kendrick-Billy Kendrick BMI); "I Want to See Jesus" (Johnny Kendrick BMI); "Just For" (Johnny Kendrick BMI); "Life's Highway" (Johnny Kendrick BMI); "Ole Piece of Clay" (Johnny Kendrick BMI); "Your Grace Is Still Amazing" (Johnny Kendrick BMI); "When I Meet You on the Other Side" (Johnny Kendrick BMI); "I Still Need You" (Johnny Kendrick BMI); "Together Again" (Johnny Kendrick BMI); "I'm Asking for a Miracle" (Johnny Kendrick BMI)

The Kendricks are based out of Jackson Ala. The group members are Johnny Kendrick, Sharon Lankford and Billy Kendrick. Their band members are Chris Kynard (piano), Anthony Sullivan (drums), Jay Seale

(bass guitar) and Coleman Windle (rhythm guitar). Altogether, since 1996, they have recorded seven albums, including the latest, “Just For You.”

This reviewer had not heard of this group until they sent their latest single “Ole Piece of Clay” to radio via Crossroads Promotions. From the opening steel guitar kickoff and the opening vocals, this reviewer/DJ was hooked. The song has gone into rotation at WFLQ radio (located in French Lick, Ind.) and is getting a lot of “who’s that group” inquiries. Undoubtedly, this is one of the best songs and groups I’ve discovered this year.

Dirk Johnson, piano player for the Original Hinsons, was the leader of the studio band, and if you like the Hinsons, this album is very Hinson-esque. “Ole Piece of Clay,” “Two Room Schoolhouse,” and “Your Grace Is Still Amazing” are three of the songs that transport you to thinking that the Hinsons might have just recorded these songs back in the day.

Kenny Hinson left us 22 years ago this past July, but his sound is very much alive and living through the Kendricks. DJs looking for a new artist to spotlight, may I recommend the Kendricks, and you may as well be hearing the question, “who is that group?”

To learn more about the Kendricks, visit www.facebook.com/thekendricksmusic.org and to get a copy of “Just For You” here at www.thekendricksmusic.org/home/ or at your favorite Gospel retail outlet.

Strongest Songs: “Two Room Schoolhouse,” “Ole Piece of Clay,” “Your Grace Is Still Amazing”



Cheri Taylor
“Sing Hallelujah”
Producer: Les Butler
2016 Independent

Songs: “Trumpet of Jesus” (M Omartian-S Omartian); “Sing Hallelujah” (David R. Williford); “God’s Great Love” (David R. Williford); “Testify” (Tammy Jones Robinette); “In the Palm of Your Hand” (Ron Block); “Victory in Jesus” (Eugene Bartlett Sr); “I’d Rather Have Jesus” (George Beverly Shea-Rhea Miller); “Miracle Man” (Lee Black-Todd Wright); “Love Flowed from Calvary” (Tammy Jones Robinette); “Wherever You Go” (Dixie Phillips-Matthew Lawson)

The latest from Cheri Taylor is “Sing Hallelujah,” the sixth CD release from this songstress from Southwestern Indiana. She hails from Lamar, Ind., and is located only about an hour away from this reviewer’s location at WFLQ. I’ve been blessed to have played her past CD releases and am now blessed to review her latest.

Les Butler once again is at the helm of the project as he has been for others of her projects, and you couldn’t ask for any better band member than Gordon Mote, who handles the piano and all keys for the project. Also filling out the band is Robb Tripp on drums/percussion, Matt Butler on electric guitar, Reggie Duncan on steel guitar, with Jimmy and Jennifer Layne and Kirk Chapman on background vocals. This CD is a mixture of new material along with Cheri singing some of her favorite hymns, including “Victory In Jesus” and “I’d Rather Have Jesus,” which she puts her signature on.

Kicking off the CD is “Trumpet of Jesus.” This song I hope will be a single down the road. What a message. I’m thankful I hear the victorious message and trumpet of Jesus. It’s a message and sound the world needs to hear.

One of my favorite songs is from the pen of Tammy Jones Robinette, “Testify.” No matter your age, testify ... tell of God’s goodness in your life and never be ashamed.

“In the Palm of Your Hand” is just music and words matched with a imploring voice from Cheri. No matter her circumstances, Cheri sings, “I’d Rather Be in the Palm of Your Hand” than any other place, no matter rich or poor.

Closing out the CD is “Wherever You Go.” No matter where you’re at, that’s where I long to be, and I’ll follow faithfully, Lord.

This CD is Cheri's best so far in her career. DJs, Cheri's latest single is from her previous CD – "Blessed" – and is entitled, "The Fire Will Fall When the Wood Is Wet." Oh Lord, we need revival, send your fire, but fire will only fall when the wood is wet. When hearts are right, when hearts are repenting and the altar is wet with tears, then the Lord will bless and send that fire we all so much need. DJs can find it on Family Music Group 2017 Volume 4 and add to your playlist for a refreshing song from an artist that will soon make her mark in the industry.

Keep up with Cheri at www.facebook.com/Cheritaylorministries/ and get a copy of "Sing Hallelujah" at www.cheritaylor.org/shop or at your favorite Gospel retail outlet.

Strongest Songs: "Trumpet Of Jesus," "Testify," "Wherever You Go"



Susan Whisnant
"Live Again"

Producer: Jeff and Susan Whisnant
2017 UIA/Independent

Songs:

"You Can Live Again" (Marcia Henry BMI); "I Prayed Through It" (Marci Henry-Barbara Huffman BMI); "A Lot Out of a Little" (Helga Kaefer-Rachel McCutcheon-Karen Gillespie BMI); "The Father Knew" (Rachel McCutcheon BMI); "Let Them Be Little" (Billy Dean-Richie McDonald); "Noah" (Monty Lane Allen); "Treasure" (Marcia Henry-Susan Whisnant BMI); "This Is Why" (Rachel McCutcheon-Dixie Phillips BMI); "Love Them While They're Here" (Jeff Bumgardner BMI); "Fear Not" (Marcia Henry BMI); "Covering of Grace" (Monty Lane Allen BMI);

"Every Door You Closed" (Kristi Fitzwater-Brian Principe-Adina Bowman)

It's been 10 long years since Susan Whisnant released a solo CD. That's an eternity for fans of Susan, and she does not disappoint with her follow-up to 2007's "For the Life of Me." Susan's singing is like putting on an old pair of jeans ... comfortable. Susan has one of those voices that just soothes the soul. What is it about her voice that is so soothing and can reduce a grown man to tears at times? When she sings, you listen and believe. There are not too many voices like her's that are instantly identifiable.

There are so many great songs on this CD. The first release is "I Prayed Through It." There is no problem too tough. Don't be afraid and pray through it. They are some of the best lyrics I have heard in a long while.

Susan tackles one of my favorite Billy Dean tunes, "Let Them Be Little." She and her husband Jeff sing this convincingly, and it would be a great follow-up single. Songs of faith like, "Faith In Place," "This Is Why," and "Fear Not," remind us that whether through tough times, or losing a loved one, we need to hang on. We'll get through this. With God and faith, anything is possible.

One of my true favorites and a standout on the CD is "A Lot Out of a Little." God can make a lot out of a little, like in the story of the boy and his lunch. With God, his lunch was supersized, and God turned that desert place into an all-you-eat buffet. All we have to do is be a willing vessel, and God can make a "Lot Out Of A Little."

Overall, this CD is the best of Susan's career. The years were worth the wait. Most CDs contain an average of 10 songs, but after 10 years, Susan gave us a bonus with 13 songs of pure Whisnant gold.

Thank you Susan and please don't make us fans wait another 10 years.

Keep up with Susan and all the Whisnants at www.facebook.com/TheWhisnants/ and get a copy of the CD at www.mcssl.com/store/whisnants or at your favorite retail Gospel outlet.

Strongest Songs: "I Prayed Through It," "A Lot Out of a Little," "Let Them Be Little"

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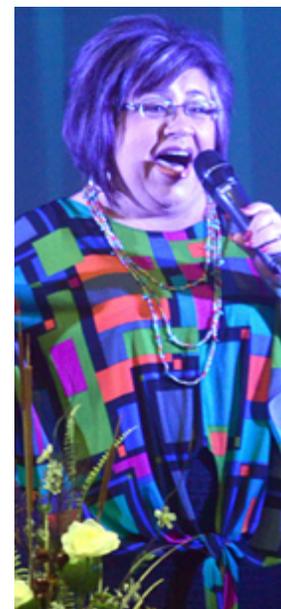
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A Look Through The Lens of Craig Harris:

Photographs by Craig Harris



This month we feature images from the James D. Vaughan Quartet Festival, which was held at the Crockett Theatre in Lawrenceburg, Tenn. Some of the artists appearing included the McKameys, Dixie Echoes, Guardians, Tribute, Hoppers, Hopper Brothers 2.0 and Triumphant Quartet. SGNScoops photographer Craig Harris also attended a Perrys concert on August 11, 2017 at the Solid Rock Baptist Church in Greenbrier, Tenn. Other images feature the Lesters, in concert in the Nashville, Tenn., area on Aug. 6, 2017 at the Dry Fork Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Bethpage, Tenn. and the Union Hill Baptist Church in Goodlettsville, Tenn.



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Rapid return to the road

Eli Fortner

of the McKameys has shockingly-quick recovery from recent kidney transplant

By Craig Harris

Eli Fortner's faith has grown. Surviving trials can result in that outcome. However, he readily admits that having faith that he would be healed from the kidney condition that he has battled for most of his life has wavered at times.

"Before (his recent kidney transplant), I didn't think I was going to make it," Fortner shares. "I've lived this good life, and I'm done."

For the moment, the only thing that he's done with is his health struggles.

"I go through hell, but now, I'm back out of it," Fortner emphasizes. "My outlook on life is way different. Your relationship with God gets better. He takes you through this so that you can learn to depend on Him. You're helpless. You're not in control."

The 23-year-old has battled health issues from an early age. Fortner contracted strep throat as a six-month-old, and the illness made its way down into his kidneys, resulting in a diagnosis of Nephrotic Syndrome at age

two. Nephrotic Syndrome causes kidney damage and eventually failure, and it led to a childhood filled with doctor visits and eventually a kidney transplant at 13 years old.

Luckily, his father – Roger Fortner – was a match to give his son a kidney. "Everything went fine," Eli Fortner remembers of the first transplant. "It's normal. I live a good life. I went through my teenage years.

"In March of this year, they said, 'your levels and numbers are looking bad, so let's take a look at it.'





“It was like getting kicked (finding out). I was in denial basically.”

Finding out that his kidney was failing came as a surprise due to the fact that he wasn't feeling the effects of his condition ... at least, up until that point.

“My feet were swelling,” Fortner explains. “It was just one foot. I thought it was a medicine, maybe a side effect. I was actually doing my taxes, and they called and told me they wanted me to come to the emergency room. (The doctor) walked in, and I was laying in the bed. They were going to put me on dialysis, and he said, ‘I hate to tell you this, but it looks like your kidney is giving up.’”

“About a day or two later, I noticed I wasn't feeling good any more. I couldn't lay down. I couldn't sleep. I couldn't breathe. I finally said, ‘you either bite the bullet, or you die.’ That was in my own head. I bit the bullet.”

After going through four hours of daily dialysis for a two-month period prior to his first kidney transplant,

Fortner was reluctant to undergo the treatment again.

“I wasn't expecting a transplant for a year or two,” Fortner points out. “(Dialysis) is four hours a day, Monday, Wednesday and Friday. I didn't want to come off the road. I was doing good. I was working at the studio. I was busy. I had my dream life ... but I bit the bullet.

“I wanted to do Hemodialysis.”

Once people found out about Fortner's condition, numerous individuals reached out asking if they could be tested to see if they might be a match to donate a kidney.

“(The doctor) asked me if I had anybody willing to donate,” Fortner recalls. “I had hundreds asking (if they could be tested). There were so many people out there just all about it. (The doctor) didn't believe me.

“My doctor doesn't talk about God. He never talked about God. Everybody said he never talked about God. I don't know if he believed (in God). I went back in to see him, and he said, ‘listen Elijah, don't get your hopes up about Facebook stuff (inquiries about being tested to be a donor).’ I just smirked.”

Fortner's outlook changed as the inquiries poured in.

“When all of this first started, I couldn't play ... my heart was in nothing,” Fortner points out. “It's reality. Death is looking you in the eye.

“When I realized there was a chance, when these people came forth, that's when I said, ‘there's hope.’ That meant a lot. That's when I started saying, ‘maybe I will



get a second chance.’ There were people in the (Southern Gospel Music) business (who inquired), some of my friends.”

However, what was believed to be a dead end turned into the answer to many prayers.

“My buddy C.J. Shetley, he’s an avid McKameys fan,” Fortner shares. “We basically grew up together. He was a fan, became friends, and now, he’s like a part of the family. He told my dad, ‘me and my wife both would like to get tested.’ It took two or three or four weeks for me to get back with them.

“My dad was like, ‘C.J. is all about it. I think you better get back with him. He’s a good kid. He’s a good man.’ I called him, and he was all about it, he and his wife Kayla both. He said, ‘I’m all about it. I want to be tested.’”

However, Fortner’s blood is type O, ending that possibility as Shetley said that he was A-positive.



“He said, ‘well, I’m sorry man ... I was willing,’” Fortner remembers. “About three days after I told him I was an O, he called me. I was going down the interstate and got a text and then a call. He said, ‘Hey man, my heart is beating out of my chest. I went to the doctor and got tested, and I’m an O.’ His parents are A-positive. His wife is A-positive. His kids are A-positive.

“He calls in and starts testing the next day (to see if he was a match) ... he starts testing before I do. C.J. was the first one tested, because I knew how serious he was.”

However, until the transplant occurred, Fortner attempt-

ed to curb his enthusiasm.

“The whole time, I kept myself as best I could from getting excited,” Fortner admits. “They were saying, ‘at any time, we can pull him if we find something,’ but everything was a green light. They thought he may have diabetes or something, but he passed (that test).

“Everything was slow until then. Now, it was flippin’ fast. Basically, they would just tell me a day to come in and see what they could do to fit me in everywhere (to complete pre-surgical testing). Within two weeks, it was done. It was the quickest transplant UT (the University of Tennessee Medical Center) has ever seen. Within a month, I was cleared. I was ready to go. That was unheard of. It was moving so fast that they were even bumfuzzled.”

The abrupt turn of events led to some interesting conversations between Fortner and his doctor.

“He’d say, ‘how’s it looking,’” Fortner remembers. “I’d say, ‘he got tested, and it’s good.’ He’d say, ‘you’re golden ... you have somebody looking out for you.’ I smiled and said, ‘I know ... you do too.’

“You don’t know what seed you planted there, but I really had nothing to do with it.”

Fortner is forever grateful for Shetley’s gift. “I told him, ‘you realize, I can never, ever repay you. If I gave you \$20 million, it is still not enough,’” Fortner shares.

“We were never super close, but now, it’s like we’re brothers. I have a piece of him.”

Fortner was on dialysis from April 17 until the transplant occurred on June 21.

“You have so many downers (that) you stop getting excited,” Fortner explains. “Through that whole experience, that’s what you learn the most. It was out of my control. I had the fear of, ‘what if God doesn’t want me to have one?’ I had that fear.

“When I was in dialysis, there were people that fell out in the floor. People died. I bottomed out once, didn’t pass out but went real low.”

Shetley's kidney was removed robotically, while Fortner required an incision in order to gain access to attach the kidney.

"We are laying there in O.R. (operating room) together," Fortner says. "They get him prepped. We fist bumped on (his) way out. Then, they take me back. I wake up hours later (surgery lasted 2 ½ to three hours). He did fine. I did fine."

It wasn't smooth sailing though as a week-long struggle ensued for Fortner, actually requiring them to go back in to correct a hematoma. However, the kidney didn't respond well after he came out of surgery, forcing them to do dialysis to try to get the kidney to function properly.



"They immediately assume rejection, but everything was functioning normal," Fortner points out. "They couldn't figure it out. The next day, I went back to dialysis. They were trying to get the kidney to wake up. About two days later, it started. The numbers were falling (in line). It's just been better and better and better."

The removal of fluid led to Fortner dropping 61 pounds over a three-week period.

Fortner is hoping that the successful transplant puts a difficult last year in the rear-view mirror.

"I had a rough year," Fortner admits. "I hate drama, but my last year has been drama filled."

"My mom (Connie Fortner) told me last year that maybe next year will be a total year of new beginnings. She was right. Seven is God's number. In 2007, I had the first transplant. In 2017, I had the second transplant. My truck is a 2007. I started playing guitar when I was seven years old. I got saved when I was seven years old. She was right ... my whole world has shifted completely."

His parents were supportive throughout the process.

"Obviously, it was hard (for them)," Fortner explains. "They've been through it once. My mom, on the first transplant, she had both me and my dad down (in surgery). My mom would tell me that as long as you're good and your attitude is good, we're going to be good, but it had to be hard on them."

"We supported each other. If I stayed up, I was supporting them. If they stayed up, they were supporting me."

When the McKameys stepped on stage on July 21 for the Lighthouse 40th Anniversary Sing in Tallahassee, Fla., Fortner was back in familiar surroundings.

"I look how fast it happened and how well it has gone ... that was all God," Fortner emphasizes. "I draw everything from this. I draw life from this. I'm quiet and to myself most of the time, but I love people and being around people. I'm most at home on stage. My friends, my family, the people I love ... it's out here. Most people go back home for that, but I go away from home. I have friends at the house, but out here (touring) is where I want to be."

"That's something I learned through the whole process ... this is what I've been put here to do."

The love that Fortner was shown from fans and fellow artists during the recent scare was overwhelming.

"It was a shock to me," Fortner points out. "This is my family. This is my world (Southern Gospel Music). I would do anything I could for these people. I had good

support at home. Ronnie Booth called me. Different people would text me. I play and listen to everything (musically), but Southern Gospel is still home to me. (The response) was crazy. Randall Crawford of the Kingsmen texted me and said, ‘can you please get out of the hospital so that social media will stop talking about you?’ We’re great friends. Cody McVey even talked about donating. He started a GoFundMe (account). Even rock and country (music) people have posted things. Bill Bailey would Facetime me from stage... and I’m sitting here going, ‘I thought I was always the guy in the back.’ It’s crazy all the comments, the cards I’ve gotten, the donations.”

Fortner has played acoustic guitar for the McKameys since 2011, alongside his father on the electric guitar. The family group’s frontline consists of four vocalists – Connie Fortner, Eli’s aunt Sheryl Farris, and Eli’s grandparents Peg McKamey Bean and Ruben Bean.

“I was born into it,” Eli Fortner says. “There was really no point where I said, ‘I want to do that.’”

“Music is my life, no matter what style. I’m a musician first. I’ve just always wanted to be a working musician. What it comes down to with me is that it’s all music.”

Fortner has been on stage with a variety of artists, including Country Music icon Vince Gill. He also has a home recording studio and both writes and films music videos as well.

“I love creating my own music and hearing it back,” Fortner shares. “It’s my emotion coming back.”

And it’s emotional for him to be back.

“It’s absolutely insane,” Fortner emphasized. “I’ll stop and say, ‘that actually all happened.’”

“It was crazy the amount of people who wanted to help. It was crazy the amount of people who prayed. It was all crazy.”

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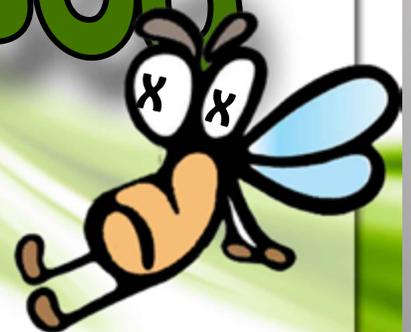
2017 August SGNScoops Top 40 Christian Country

- 1 Bruce Hedrick - Wingin' It
- 2 Christian Davis - He Can't Stop Loving You
- 3 Justin Todd Herod - That's What Jesus Would Do
- 4 Taylon Hope - Showin' My Roots
- 5 HighRoad - We Are Broken
- 6 Michael Lee - God's Country
- 7 Buddy Jewel - I'm There
- 8 Steve Bridgmon - Angels By Another Name
- 9 Austin Zimmer - Quicksand
- 10 Chuck Day - I Love You
- 11 Ava Kasich - Looking Back
- 12 Debbie Bennett - He's Coming Back
- 13 Mike Manuel - Where's the Family?
- 14 Appointed 2 - Secret Weapon
- 15 Ronnie Horton - For You and Me
- 16 Arenos - Never Let Me Down
- 17 Butch Tinker - That's What It's All About
- 18 Brent Harrison - Follow Your Heart Home
- 19 Tommy Brandt II - Can't You See
- 20 Arkin Terrell - If This is All There Is
- 21 The Wards - Bible Revival

- 22 Tony Bates - Ordinary Joe
- 23 Karen Harris - Don't You Think Its Time
- 24 Shellem Cline - Why Can't Christians Share The Love of Christ
- 25 Johnny Rowlett - Where I'm Going
- 26 Debbie Seagraves - We're Not Gonna Walk, We're Gonna Run
- 27 Hillary Scott - Beautiful Messes
- 28 Kevin Rowe - Heaven Above
- 29 McKay Project - Taking Me Home
- 30 Eternal Vision - A Fathers Prayer
- 31 Charlie Griffin - Jesus Take A Hold
- 32 Chuck Hancock - Mustard Seed Faith
- 33 Lisa Daggs - Well Worn
- 34 Kali Rose - What's A Valley
- 35 Bev McCann - You Are Welcome Here
- 36 Chris Golden - On The Sunny Banks
- 37 Bradley Walker - Sinner's Only
- 38 Jerry Branscomb - Hug 'Em While You Can
- 39 Peter Christie - On Grace I Stand
- 40 Tammy Renee - Dreams

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Jonathan Wilburn

I'm Not Giving Up

By Justin Gilmore

If you know anything about Southern Gospel Music, you have certainly heard the name Wilburn. That talented family produced one of Southern Gospel Music's finest vocalists, Jonathan Wilburn.

Wilburn is well known for his tenure with the legendary Gold City Quartet from 1996-2008. His powerful and soulful lead voice helped to define the quartet's sound, and he was a part of one of its most beloved lineups that also included Jay Parrack, Mark Trammell and Tim Riley. While with the quartet, Wilburn received many awards for favorite lead singer from 2000-2005.

After departing Gold City, Wilburn joined forces with his son Jordan to form the popular duo Wilburn

and Wilburn in 2011. Their tight family harmony garnered them great success. In 2012, they won an award for horizon group of the year. Jordan also received the horizon individual award that year as well.

Wilburn now rides solo as Jordan came off of the road to be with his family in July. The year of 2017 opens an exciting new chapter for Wilburn, and he is ready for what God has in store for him.

Southern Gospel has been a major part of his life, beginning in his early years. His parents – Jackie and Elaine – were a successful Gospel Music duo and passed on their love for this music to their son.



“My mom and dad had a regional group called the Happiness Quartet when I was a kid,” Wilburn shares. “I loved the music, fellowship, and the people. They stopped singing in that group, and mom, dad, my two brothers and I began singing. We then added my sister-in-law. We had an old 4104 (bus) and started a little more extensive travel. Our schedule began to be more demanding, so my brothers – who were married – decided to stay home. Mom, dad and I recorded our first album with Eddie Crook called ‘Reporting for Duty.’ That is how it all started with me singing.”

Wilburn learned the craft under two of the best and has become a great vocalist in his own right. His family also taught him some great life lessons that he would later use in his ministry.

“Christ used simple things to get His point across,” Wilburn explains. “That is usually what I do, (sharing simple stories to get my point across). My life growing up has been about family. I was close to my grandparents on both sides. They were a huge part of my raising. The lives they lived and stories of perseverance through life are some of the things I use,

common-sense things ... common people just going through life.”

After leaving the family group, he joined Gold City and became a major part of the group’s legacy. While a member of the quartet, Wilburn became known for songs such as “I’m Not Giving Up,” “He Said,” and “Midnight Cry.”

Wilburn has had many memorable experiences in his career, but one of his most cherished is with the quartet.

“I was with Gold City and we recorded the song ‘I’m Not Giving Up’ on a Gaither video,” Wilburn remembers. “Somehow, we knew at that point that Tim Riley, Mark Trammell, Jay Parrack and I had a special deal going.”

Wilburn maintains a heart for service to Christ and for sharing His Word.

“My mission statement is to tell as many people about Jesus as I possibly can before I die or I’m raptured out of this old world,” Wilburn points out. “As an artist, there are several things I want people to take from my albums. I first want them to see my heart for Jesus. I want them to be taken to a place of worship. I want them to take a spiritual journey with me that helps them forget this world and all its cares for a few minutes. Most of all, (I hope) that it sheds the light of Christ in their heart and homes. That in some small way makes an eternal difference in their lives and their family’s lives.”

One such example of this recently occurred.

“Just recently, I was asked to teach a vocal class at the Do Re Mi Academy of Gospel Music (in Hartsville, Tenn.,” Wilburn shares. “I usually am there every year. It is an awesome campus with great teachers and staff with a heart for this music, but most of all a heart for God. Well, I had this little girl about seven or eight years old. I won’t give her name, but she is such a sweet kid. She comes to see me sing when I’m in the area. Her mom had told me what a fan she was. Normally, when I’m at the school, I do a concert on the last night I’m there. This year, I talked about the Singing At Sea (cruise). It is an all-Christian cruise that features great Southern Gospel Music, preaching and Christian comedy. They close the bars

and casinos.

“Her mom said when they got home that her daughter told her that she had rather go on that Singing At Sea (cruise) with Jonathan Wilburn than to go to Disney World. When I heard this, I was so blessed to think this child loved me and this music more than Mickey Mouse. With that said, they are signed up and ready for the cruise in February.”

Encounters like these reaffirm Wilburn’s desire to serve the Lord.

“This music is story-based music, and the main character is Jesus,” Wilburn explains. “This music has helped me keep my eyes on the main character.”

The future is looking bright for this talented vocalist. Wilburn is currently working on a new CD entitled “God and Country” as a soloist for Daywind Records. It is slated for release later this year. This upcoming recording will include a mix of hymns, new songs, and patriotic songs that possesses his signature power and style. However, listeners can hear his latest radio single now.

“My latest radio release is a song called ‘Prayer Is All I Need,’ written by Sue C. Smith, Val Dacus and Randall Garland,” Wilburn says. “I fell in love with this song as soon as I heard the demo sitting in Rick Shelton’s office. Rick is at Daywind Publishing and always has good songs up his sleeve.

“My prayer is this song will ignite in Christians (that) the single place for help is at the feet of Jesus. In Him is my hope. In Him I put my trust, and He has never let me down. Men fail. Money fails. Health fails, but He has never failed. Prayer is all I need.”

He feels that it’s an important message the world needs to hear.

“We are close to the returning of Jesus,” Wilburn emphasizes. “I hope and pray to see souls saved in my concerts. I hope to present a spirit-filled message that will uplift the church and convict the lost. Great music is good, but spirit-filled is the best.

“Come and see me this year, and I am going to do my very best to present the Gospel in spirit and truth through the vehicle of the best music in the world, Southern Gospel.”

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Kaleb's Kuts

"STILL" CD REVIEW



By Kaleb Powell

Kaleb Powell is one of the newer additions to SGNScoops Magazine. We have so many projects being submitted for review that our monthly reviewer, Randall Hamm, needed some assistance. We hope you enjoy Kaleb Powell's look at new releases. To send CDs for his review, please send to: kaleb.akmoftn@outlook.com (for digital releases). For physical releases, please send your CD to Kaleb Powell, 245 Willow Ridges Dr., Chuckey, Tenn., 37641.

Greater Vision "Still"

Release Date: 8/4/2017
Genre: Southern Gospel

Songs: "There is Hope" (Chris Allman and Rodney Griffin); "Still" (Rodney Griffin); "Rolled Back Stone" (Lee Back and Dianne Wilkinson); "I Believe It All" (Janice Crow); "God Doesn't Care" (Chris Allman); "His Grave Wrote the Song" (Rodney Griffin); "Jesus Stood" (Rodney Griffin); "Forgiven by the Lord" (Chris Allman); "Common Garments" (Rodney Griffin); "All the Above" (Babbie Mason and Rodney Griffin); "Nothing to See" (Rodney Griffin and Marcia Henry); "The Gospel" (Chris Allman)

Initial impression: Greater Vision never ceases to amaze me with song choice and the message that each CD project contains.

Greater Vision, formed by Gerald Wolfe, is the most awarded trio in Gospel Music with its rich vocal blend that began in December of 1990. This trio has great abilities when it comes to presenting the message of the gospel.

Greater Vision has released many recordings all presenting Jesus Christ, who was crucified. This new album, "Still," is no different in the area of ministering to those who will listen. This has to be my favorite album recorded by Greater Vision, as it not only shows great musicianship but also a song choice that is a good fit for the trio. The addition of Jon Epley adds a new texture to the trio's blend. Gerald Wolfe continues to play piano for the group as well as emcee their concerts. The new CD features brand-new songs written by both lead singer Rodney Griffin and tenor singer Chris Allman, as well as many other successful writers such as Dianne Wilkinson, Marcia Henry and the incomparable Babbie Mason.

The title cut, "Still," carries a wonderful message. The song says that, regardless of how the world is today, we

still need to continue in the old-fashioned way, such as hearing about God's goodness, singing songs of Jesus' Blood, and having an altar where broken ones can pray, even in a world that is seeking a new path.

One of my personal favorite songs is "There Is Hope." It is always refreshing to hear that there is still hope for those who have not made the choice to follow Christ. The reminder that Christ is still saving and changing lives is a great message.

Greater Vision has once again recorded a remarkable CD from the first note of the first song all the way to the last note of the last song. There is no need to skip to the next song.

Keep up with Greater Vision at www.facebook.com/greatervisionmusic and get a copy of "Still" at www.greatervisionmusic.com.

A promotional poster for Debbie Seagraves Ministries. It features a photograph of Debbie Seagraves, a woman with blonde hair, wearing a black and silver patterned top, standing on a stage with a microphone stand. The background is dark with some stage lights. The text is overlaid on the image.

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A promotional poster for Peter Christie. It features a photograph of Peter Christie, a man with glasses, wearing a black shirt, playing an acoustic guitar on stage. The background is dark with some stage lights. The text is overlaid on the image.

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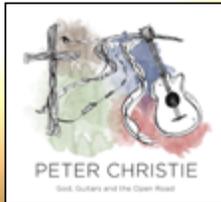
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Matthew Holt

“stays close”

Gaither Homecoming Tour pianist has his patience rewarded
By Craig Harris

Matthew Holt’s illogical choice led to a road flooded with fulfillment.

“I was supposed to go to college,” Holt – a West Tennessee native who graduated as the McKenzie High School valedictorian – recalls. “I was supposed to be the doctor or whatever. I was supposed to go all the way and finish up every degree you possibly could. I played drums in the marching band (at the University of Tennessee at Martin), and I remember being on the practice field. This was the week before classes started before my freshman year. My cell phone rang and it was Brian Free.”

Months earlier, Holt filled in for two weeks with the Kingsmen.

“(Kingsmen pianist) Nic Succi had gotten hung up in Canada due to some paperwork,” Holt explains. “My mom and dad had taken me to every Kingsmen concert within three hours since I was born. They would bring me up to play a song. Anthony (Burger) would pick me up and put me on the bench to play a song, so I got a

phone call from Ray (Reese, the long-time bass singer for the Kingsmen) wanting me to fill in for a couple of weeks until Nic got back in the country. The second night I was filling in for them, we were in Seminole, Okla., at a Frank Arnold date. The Perrys were there and (along) with some other people. I’m loving life, getting to fill in for my favorite quartet at the time.

“Ray Dean took a liking to me. He’s the one who gave Brian Free my number. That’s the reason why he had called me while I was at marching band practice. (Brian Free and Assurance pianist) Josh Simpson was leaving the group at the time, but I had already committed to going to college. So, I politely declined. I finished my freshman year of college and everything is going the way it’s supposed to go. Starting in my senior year of high school, I became the minister of music at my home church (Long Heights Baptist Church in McKenzie). I was going to college, working 20 hours of week at the church, had a kids choir ... it was perfect. I was making great money. The youth minister at my church was taking kids up to Cedar Point (amusement park in Ohio), and on my way home, I get a call from (Perrys bass



singer) Tracy Stuffle out of nowhere. Ray Dean had given them my number. We got to talking, and it just felt right from the first time I talked to him. Tracy was so nice. He wasn't pushy at all."

Holt wasn't convinced of what he should do if the Perrys offered him their soon-to-be vacant pianist position.

"I was really a male quartet guy," Holt admits. "I called a couple of guys I had gotten to know in the industry and asked their advice. I went to Walmart when I got home from their trip. Walmart still carried Southern Gospel (Music) back then, and I bought (Perrys' CD) 'This is the Day.' The very first track, it started with a ridiculous piano intro. I fell in love with their music.

"They wanted me to come out and ride with them for the weekend. Tracy said, 'Let's see if we like you and if you like us.' (Perrys pianist) Justin Ellis was leaving to join the Crabb Family. He was on the bus and he was super gracious. The rest is history."

However, it actually wasn't that simple.

"Now, I have to go home and resign my position at the church," Holt recalls. "Life was crazy. They were paying me to go to school. I was considered a university scholar. They only pick 15 incoming freshman a year (as university scholars). That alone paid for your tuition, room and board, and meals ... and I've accepted

this job with this group. I get back home, and I have to tell everybody that I'm leaving college to go on the road and play for a quartet. I had to tell my pastor. That was one of the toughest things I've ever had to do in my life. My grandma was nearing death ... everything was coming down. I actually called Tracy and told him I was giving the job back. I got cold feet. It was crazy.

"About a week later, I was completely convicted. I couldn't sleep. I was 19 and was having to make some really tough decisions. I called Tracy back, and they were in Central Oklahoma. It's where I met them the first time two years previous. Libbi will tell you to this day that she told Tracy not to hire me. She said, 'He's fickle. He doesn't know what he wants.' Tracy told his wife that he knew that's what they were supposed to do. Staying with them four years were four of the best years of my life. It was four very formative years. I couldn't ask for a better place to grow and learn. They quickly became family. They still are. They were the two biggest cheerleaders I had when I began the audition process for the Gaither Vocal Band. I still have a note that Libbi wrote saying, 'We believe in you. We know you can do this. You were born to do this. We love you.' I carry that to this day. I never take it out of my checkbook. I could not ask for a better start."

During that time, Holt teamed up with Perrys' baritone singer Joseph Habedank to form a songwriting tandem.

"Tracy said, 'Boys, why don't y'all try to write a song on this new record,'" Holt remembers. "I had been around music my whole life, but I had never tried to write anything for someone's CD. We wrote the song



'He Forgot' in about 10 minutes waiting for Loren (Harris, the group's lead singer at the time) to get to the bus (a cut that reached No. 3 on the radio charts). It didn't stop there. We kept writing."

Their song "When Jesus Prays" was also recorded on the same project, "Come Thirsty."



"Joseph is a great melody writer," Holt points out. "It was a God thing. He put us together."

"(Greater Vision's) Rodney Griffin is the one who encouraged us from the get-go. He said, 'Guys, if you're going to do this for the rest of your lives, you need to start your own publishing company.' So, we did (Habeholt Music). Here we are 11 years later, and we've had 150-plus cuts."

Holt has written songs for Brian Free and Assurance, the Kingdom Heirs, Gold City, Lauren Talley, the Inspirations, Tribute Quartet, Karen Peck and New River, the Kingsmen, the Mark Trammell Trio and the Hoppers. Some of the most successful songs include the Inspirations' "The Rose," Ivan Parker's "Mary's Wish," and "Almost Morning" by the Perrys.

Though he had never written songs until he joined the Perrys, Holt's love for music was evident from an early age.

"I started playing when I was (age) three," Holt shares. "That's all I've ever done. I don't ever remember a time when I didn't play. I'm the only person in the entire family on both sides that can do anything musical. It's

obviously a God-given talent that I will never, ever take credit for.

"As a seven-year-old kid in the back seat of the car, I remember bowing my head and praying that, 'if you'll allow me to play for a Southern Gospel quartet, I'll never do anything else.' God obviously heard it. I'm thankful for all of the experiences, and I'm still learning."

Predictably, his biggest musical influence was a member of the Kingsmen.

"It was without a doubt Anthony Burger," Holt emphasizes. "He was my hero. He is my hero. He's the reason I started playing. We were at a Kingsmen concert, and Anthony was playing piano. This is what mom and dad tell me. I was two-and-a-half years old. They were singing in a gymnasium, and I would watch Anthony and would turn around and start mimicking him on the bleachers. They went to Walmart and bought me a miniature Casio keyboard. By age three, I was playing. I would hear it and I would play. It was by ear. We sang 'Sweet Hour of Prayer' at church. We came home, and they heard from the other room me playing, 'Sweet Hour of Prayer.'"



"When (Burger) passed away back in 2006, he was inducted into the Southern Gospel Music Association Hall of Fame that next year in '07. I was asked to be the guy who came and played a piano solo in his memory. Everything kind of came full circle."

However, his eventual departure from the Perrys wasn't an easy decision.

“I did not want to leave the Perrys,” Holt says. “It was one of the hardest things I’ve ever done, leaving Tracy and Libbi. They were my mom and dad on the road.

“We had our first kid. We had Fletcher in December of 2007, and I lasted about six months (after that). The Perrys worked a lot. We were on the road about 250 days a year. The 260-270 days on the road a year were really hard. I was missing so much of seeing Fletcher crawl for the first time and seeing him say da-da for the first time. I was quickly convicted. I had to be daddy first before I could be quartet piano player. Lindsey and I started praying, saying that if it was God’s will for me to do something else that He would open the door. We were okay if it was not (His will) too. We had been praying for a few weeks, and I got the call from Bethel (University, which is located in McKenzie) to come and fill a position there.”

After four years with the Perrys, Holt left the group in 2008 to become a part of the Bethel University Renaissance program. He became the executive director of that music program in 2014. Last fall, of Bethel’s 1,100-1,200 students, more than 300 were a part of the Renaissance program.

The Renaissance program’s quartet actually won the talent contest at the National Quartet Convention in 2009.

However, Holt missed being on the road and actually traveled some weekends with the Perrys beginning in 2010.

Then, in March of 2012, he received a call from Gaither Homecoming Tour bass singer Gene McDonald informing him that Gordon Mote was leaving the fold.

“I was ecstatic,” Holt says. “Thankfully, Gene thought of me. He put (Homecoming Tour guitarist) Kevin Williams on the phone.

“It started with me sending in a demo. That turned into them saying that we’re going to be in Nashville (on April 19) ... why don’t you come and hang out? I had learned every Gaither Vocal Band song I could get my hands on. I’ll bet I knew over 100. I knew them in every key. I had done my homework. (Bill Gaither) called me up. They had just finished two songs off of the ‘Pure and Simple’ project. I played two songs I had never heard in my life during sound check. I know now that (Gaither) did it on purpose. You have to be ready. It’s a hot seat. There’s a lot of pressure there. The piano player drives everything in quartet music.”

The audition went well ... or so he thought.

“I thought I killed it,” Holt emphasized. “I thought it was awesome. Bill comes up and says, ‘What size suit do you wear?’ He’s talking all the lingo. We had lunch.

I thought he was going to offer me the job that night. I sat by the monitor board with (audio engineer) Rory Rigdon. I took notes. Rory was very positive. Everybody was super nice. I thought, ‘I have this thing in the bag.’ The only thing that Bill told me at the end of the night was ‘stay close.’” I’m like, ‘what does that mean?’



“Fast forward to June, I haven’t heard anything in between from Gaither world. I thought, well, maybe I lost the gig. I get a phone call from Kevin saying, ‘Hey, Bill wants you to come up to the studio in Alexandria (Ind.). Bill wants you to spend more time (there).’ Kevin came up there too. I was in studio C where all the (Homecoming) videos were filmed. That was cool. I spent two or three hours. He drilled me. The preparation didn’t pay off in April, but it paid off in June. He drilled me pretty hard. He walked me out again to my car. What did I get? ... ‘stay close’ ... that’s all I got.”

Gaither – who conducted approximately 40 auditions – remained consistent at that point.



“I get a call from the office in July,” Holt remembers. “They’re going on an Alaskan cruise in July. Bill says, ‘Hey, I’m still looking at some more guys. We’re going on this cruise, and Gordon is not going. Would you be willing to go with us?’ I’m like, ‘Yeah.’ We did 18 shows in six days. He never calls the same song twice. I did well. I didn’t mess up. We get to the end of the cruise. Bill comes over to me, and guess what I got ... ‘stay close.’ Every friend Bill has was coming out of the woodwork saying ‘you need to (consider) this guy.’ He wants to honor all of his friends’ (requests).

“I get another call in August ... ‘Hey, we have three dates in August. Can you work those?’ So, I’m working all of the fill-in dates. It was the same thing in September. The whole time, Bill is saying, ‘We’re nearing the shore. Stay close.’

“The weekend before we went to the National Quartet Convention, at intermission, Bill pulls me over and says, ‘If you want the job, it’s your’s.’ After all I had gone through, he picked the most simple time when we’re eating cheese and crackers and relaxing before we go back out. All of the guys are hollering. It was like we were in the dugout. They were all like, ‘We knew you had the job months ago.’ He officially hired me as far as telling the world on the NQC stage the next week, and he had me play ‘Goodbye World, Goodbye.’”

It was the answer to a 20-year-old prayer.

“I had gone through so much ... it was an emotional roller coaster for those seven months, not knowing if I was going to get the gig or not,” Holt explains. “I didn’t

cry. It was just excitement at that point. I had been out there enough with the guys that we were already close. It didn’t feel like a new gig anymore. As soon as we got through high-fiving, I called my wife and said, ‘I finally got the gig.’ It was just thankfulness.

“Bill pulled me over a couple of months after I had technically been there full-time. He said, ‘You’ve done good. You’ve done really good. You know, Matthew, at some point in everybody’s life, the line of preparation meets the line of opportunity. There was no doubt that the preparation was there.’ It was his way of encouraging me. He knew ... even in those seven months I was doubting everything. I lost 30 pounds (from when Gene called in March to the cruise in July). I had gotten heavy. I didn’t want that to stand in the way of me getting the gig. The day after Gene called me, I went on a diet and starting doing the insanity workouts. It was important to me. It wasn’t about the money. It wasn’t about the prestige of the Gaither Vocal Band. It was so much about the honest conversation I had in the back of that car as a seven-year-old boy.”

Five years later, the 32-year-old still sits in the same spot that his musical mentor did.

“The Gaither thing is the pinnacle,” Holt points out. “It’s the end-all, be-all, but at the same time, it has nothing to do with the job. It has to do with the calling and preparation meeting the opportunity. That was my hero’s job ... I wanted it ... I got it.”

What he has experienced has exceeded his expectations.

“Is it more than I thought it would be ... absolutely,” Holt emphasizes. “Every day is a little different, and what I didn’t expect was the realness of everybody out there. It is so much more than I thought it was. Kevin Williams said it best. When I first got the gig, he said, ‘You’re going to turn around in a couple of years and realize it’s so much bigger than you thought it was.’

“To see how much Bill cares ... he’s 81 years old now. He’s been on the road 50 years. To see how much he cares ... we were sitting around the lunch catering, and he was talking about the songs he was going to use at the Homecoming Sing-A-Long at NQC. He was talking about it, and it didn’t take 45 seconds to see a tear roll down his face. Bill loves harmony. He got bit by a harmony bug, but it’s so much more than that to him. It’s so much more than the singers. It’s about what



can the songs say to people that can make a difference in somebody's life.

“The way Bill does it, it's different than the way anybody does it in the business. Bill will call the song and sit back. He's always thinking ahead. Sometimes,

we know the first song we're going to sing, but he calls the songs on the fly. He's great at reading the crowd, and he's great at being sensitive to the spirit. He's not going to create an emotional moment, but if the song speaks to people, all of that stuff takes care of itself. You don't have to create it. He doesn't try to force anything. What you see is what you get

“When I was up in the studio auditioning, he said, ‘Matthew, the one question I get asked most is, Bill, is it ministry or is it entertaining?’ I say, ‘yes and yes.’ Of course, it's entertaining or people aren't going to come see it. Of course, it's ministry. Seeing that 81-year-old coach out there every night, nobody is going to work harder than Bill Gaither does. The joke he's told night after night, he's going to sell it and make sure it feels fresh for that audience. He works the hardest of anybody on that platform. Oh, to have the drive, heart and initiative that he has at 81 years old. I'm just so thankful and privileged to be under the coaching of Bill Gaither. Kevin Williams and (drummer) Greg Richie ... the men I get to play with, they're great. They're there for me. They make me a better husband, a better father. I'm privileged to be around Godly men.”

Holt is an admitted neat freak and an avid Atlanta Braves fan who would like to have more time in his schedule to play a few rounds of golf. However, he's very thankful for all of his opportunities, including his three children (Fletcher, Ridley and Carver) and his wife Lindsey.

“My wife is awesome,” Holt shares. “She's superwoman. I couldn't do a fraction of what I do without her support. Outside of salvation, she's the best thing that's happened to me.”

Images courtesy of Matthew Holt and Craig Harris.

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This chart was compiled from a list of reporting stations. Each month we will be adding more stations.

1. Browders - Put It Into God's Hands
2. Triumphant Quartet - Chain Breaker
3. Joseph Habedank - Here He Comes
4. Bowling Family - Praise God He's Alive
5. Whisnants - Joy In The House
6. Tribute Quartet - God Of The Storms
7. Kingsmen - They Don't Know (What The Lord Can Do)
8. The Steeles - Meet Me There
9. Guardians - Packin' Up
10. Hoppers - Life Is Good
11. Brian Free and Assurance - He Will Carry You
12. Freemans - It Still Takes The Blood
13. 11th Hour - Ain't No Bones
14. Pruitt Family - Jesus Built This Church On Love
15. LeFevre Quartet - He Was There
16. The Isaacs - Rocks
17. The Perrys - Cry No More
18. Kingdom Heirs - Never Made A Promise
19. Jeff and Sheri Easter - More Than Enough
20. Old Time Preacher's Quartet - Wavin' This Old World Goodbye
21. Greater Vision - Still
22. Amber Nelon Thompson - Give It To Jesus
23. The McKameys - For The Record
24. Zane and Donna King - Beautiful Ever After
25. Hyssongs - Let The Hallelujahs Ring
26. Lauren Talley - I Hear A Song

27. Legacy Five - In The Hands Of A Carpenter
28. The Williamsons - I've Got To Tell Somebody
29. Wilburn and Wilburn - Living Proof
30. Mylon Hayes Family - It's Not A Problem For The Answer
31. Collingsworth Family - Gotta Get To Jesus
32. Erwins - He's Still Alive
33. Ernie Haase and Signature Sound - Give Me Jesus
34. The Coffmans - I Will Fear No Evil
35. Soul'd Out Quartet - Holy Spirit Come
36. Pine Ridge Boys - There's A Fountain
37. Dallas Rogers - Chasin'
38. Sunday Drive - I Thank You
39. Lore Family - Because of Grace
40. Terry Collins - Jesus Make A Way
41. Bates Family - Ready Or Not
42. The Old Paths - Tangled In The Middle
43. Battle Cry - I'm Amazed
44. The Page Trio - Perfect Redeemer
45. Shellem Cline - Why Can't Christians Share The Love Of Christ
46. The Bowling Sisters - He Sees What We Don't
47. Bless'd Ministries - Come To The Cross
48. John Whisnant - Had It Not Been
49. The Villines Trio - Elijah
50. Mark Bishop - That's When It's Time To Pray
51. Christian Davis - He Can't Stop Loving You



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52. The Journeys - I Can Smile
53. Jim Brady Trio - God Is With Me
54. Jordan Family Band - My God Is Faithful
55. Steve Ladd - All Things Are Possible God
56. Ivan Parker - Walk My Way
57. The Spiritual Voices - Love That Led To Grace
58. Surrendered - You Don't Know The Half Of It
59. Mark Trammell Quartet - My Faith Still Holds
60. ReJeana Leeth and New Grace - Thank God For My Christian Home
61. Georgia - I've Been To The Bottom
62. Chronicle - Where Did The Wind Go
63. Summit Trace - You Love Me Anyway
64. Down East Boys - Somebody Left The Door Wide Open
65. Southern Raised - Instead
66. Exodus - God Of Always And Never
67. Michael Combs - That Same Hand
68. The Millers - Take A Moment and Live
69. Calebs's Crossing - I Promise You
70. The Sharps - Endless Day
71. Cana's Voice - Heavenly Father
72. Canton Junction - When He Was On The Cross
73. The Diplomats - Let Your Light Shine
74. Parson's Redeemed - Everything Is Going To Be Alright
75. Messiah's Call - Hope For The Day
76. King James Boys - Somebody Prayed For Me
77. Jonathan Dale - I'm Still Standing
78. Austin and Ethan Whisnant - Steppin' Out On A Limb
79. Sneed Family - I've Never Seen A Promise
80. Karen Peck and New River - Hope For All Nations
81. Soul's Harbor - Saying Goodbye
82. Cody McCarver - Rise Up
83. Lore Family - Joyous News
84. Matt Linton - Now I'm A Christian

85. Lindsey Graham - A Little More Love
86. New Ground - Make It
87. Mercy's Well - Thanks To You
88. Purpose - Trust Him
89. Gibsons - No Wonder
90. Daniel's Purpose - Jesus Loved Us To Death
91. The Browns - Aim Higher
92. Sons Of The Father - I'm Ready
93. Misty Freeman - A Day In The Life Of Jesus
94. Three Bridges - Livin' In The Lion's Den
95. Second Half Quartet - Gonna Shout All Over Heaven
96. Matt Felts - Trust Me With The Trial
97. The Bibletones Quartet - Portrait of Love
98. Spoken 4 - Lay It Down
99. Goulds - Where Are The Voices
100. Eric and Laura Ollis - I Won't Compromise

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THE WALKERS

A close-up portrait of Evie Karlsson, a woman with short, layered blonde hair and bangs. She is smiling warmly at the camera, with her hand resting under her chin. She is wearing a dark top with a white floral pattern. The background is a solid red color.

Evie Karlsson

Making Jesus Known

By Jennifer Campbell

Affectionately known as “Evie,” Evelyn Tornquist Karlsson grew up as the daughter of Norwegian immigrants. One summer, while visiting relatives in Scandinavia, God opened the door for her to sing on what was then Norway’s only television channel. Yet, even amid inductions into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame and the Christian Music Hall of Fame, along with Dove Awards and Grammy Award nominations, she remains focused on the primary reason for ministry, sharing God’s love with others.

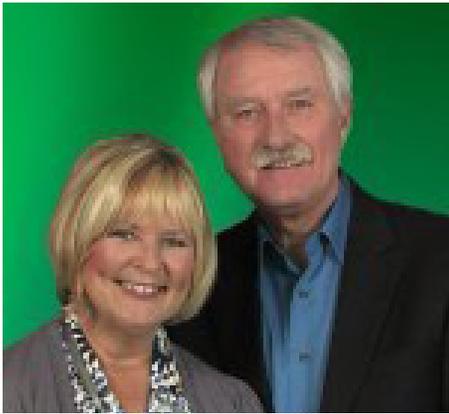
Having been influenced by many individuals, Karlsson says the greatest influence on her life has been the Lord Jesus Christ.

“Because of His being alive in my life, my life’s journey has taken me on a road that is serving Him, loving Him, wanting to make Him known,” Karlsson says.

“But if I can add another person behind Him, I would need to say my mom. We have known each other for 61 years, and I’ve often said she not only has lived the life for me of loving Christ and being a wonderful wife and mom, she has also been the one and only music teacher that I’ve had. She has an extraordinary singing voice.”

Karlsson first experienced Southern Gospel Music when she was a young girl.

“I was living in New Jersey with my mom and dad and my brother,” Karlsson explains. “I had an uncle named Paul Tornquist, who was an amazing singer in his own right, and he loved Southern Gospel. He said, ‘okay, Evelyn, when we go to the all-night singing in Harrisburg, Penn., you’re gonna hear some music you’ve never heard before, and you’re going to love it.’”



“When I saw and observed and experienced Southern Gospel Music, I was floored, because as much as I loved to sing and enjoyed all kinds of hymns and classic music, when I heard these new songs where

the harmonies were just absolutely delicious and the presenting of the song was done with great flair and skillfulness, exquisitely done by people like the Speer Family, the Blackwood Brothers, the Cathedrals, the Stamps, I was just taken aback.”

Karlsson’s fascination with Southern Gospel Music would not stop there. She soon became friends with some of the singers she encountered that evening. She once told J.D. Sumner that her dream would be to sing with the Speer Family. J.D. responded by saying, “Now darlin’, let me tell you, I think you need to sing on your own, just by yourself, not in a group and just do whatever God tells you to do and go through the doors He opens for you.”

Karlsson was somewhat disappointed in his response.

“I wanted so badly for him to say, ‘oh yes, I’ll introduce you to Brock Speer right now,’” Karlsson shares. “He said no, you really need to do your own thing, Ev. Sure enough, little by little, that’s how the Lord did lead me, and now, I have always loved Southern Gospel and always will.”



Although she loves Southern Gospel Music, God chose to put her in a slightly different genre, Contemporary

Christian Music.

“That was quite wonderful, because what I liked so much about Southern Gospel is that the songs are about Christ, the cross, His resurrection, and the life that we have in Him each day,” Karlsson explains. “I know it was the Holy Spirit anointing that music, and it spoke to my young spirit.

“That’s why I’ve always thought I never want to sing anything but music that points to Jesus, because everything else is less than good.”

Karlsson and her husband, Pelle, continue to share the love of Jesus through music.



“Suffice it to say, our desire is to make Him known and serve Him with joy every day, and that certainly means music,” Karlsson points out. “We’re always working on new songs, preparing for some ministry event using music. Missions work is very close to our heart, particularly in places like China. We want to help spread the word about how wonderful Jesus is and help people in need, in helping to build low cost healthcare clinics for the poorest of the poor through the ministry called China Mercy.”

One of the greatest aspects of Karlsson’s life is the time she spends with her family.

“Right now, I am in a season that I am enjoying to the fullest because I am not away from my family very much at all,” Karlsson says. “It means a lot to be able to

spend time with them, as well as my dear mom, who is 91 and lives with us.”

Their son Kris works as a guitarist, singer, writer and producer in Nashville.

“He and I have done tours together, which is just every mom’s dream come true,” Karlsson admits.

Kris has been an important part of his mother’s music ministry, having produced her latest project, “Songs from the Hymn Book.” This project includes songs that Karlsson grew up singing at Trinity Pentecostal Church in Elizabeth, N.J.

“The fun part for me was that our son Kris was the producer and arranger of that record, and I think he did an absolutely outstanding job,” Karlsson shares. “He sang with me as well on a few songs.”

One of Karlsson’s most iconic songs is “Come On, Ring Those Bells.”

“I love that song,” Karlsson emphasizes. “Andrew Culverwell, a real precious brother in Christ, was born in England, and he wrote this song and another song I was privileged to sing called ‘Born Again.’”

“I love it because it’s a great Christmas message, that this season is all about the birth of the King of Kings, and we celebrate Him. We ring our bells. The arrangement turned out so lovely. It’s been a real honor to sing that, and I still do. I’m still ringing those bells for Jesus.”

While Karlsson is known for her vocal talent, she has also written a beautiful song titled, “The Bridge of Prayer,” which is featured on her newest project.

“It was the only song I have ever written, but I think it was a song the Lord gave to me that is underscoring that truth about when we pray to the Lord, we are meeting other Christians and friends on a bridge of prayer,” Karlsson points out. “I love that because in Scandinavia, especially in Sweden where my husband is from, some of the old-time saints would say, ‘I’ll meet you on the bridge of prayer.’”

Karlsson’s Scandinavian heritage is what helped launch her ministry.

“We would often visit the family in Norway, and as God ordained it, the summer I was 14 years old, an opportunity arose for me to sing quite a bit that summer in different Christian conferences and also on television,” Karlsson remembers. “God made it possible for me, without my asking, when the producer said, ‘we’d like you to come and sing on our show.’ I sang, ‘He the Pearly Gates Will Open’ in Norwegian and in English, and I ended with singing ‘Put Your Hand in the Hand,’ an old Gospel song. The Lord took that opportunity He gave me and opened lots of wonderful opportunities for singing, all because the Lord said, ‘Come with me Evie ... we’re gonna have some fun and tell a lot of people about My love, so just go with Me and go along with My plan.’ That’s exactly what I did, and I’m so grateful.”

One of the most memorable moments Karlsson has experienced was being part of the Billy Graham Crusades from the mid-1970s to mid-1980s.

“I got to see firsthand, a team of men and women that were confidently dedicated to the cause of Jesus Christ,” Karlsson says. “From Dr. Graham to (Billy Graham Evangelistic Association music and program director) Cliff Barrows to (Billy Graham Evangelistic Association featured soloist) George Beverly Shea, and the other folks on the music team and staff, there was nothing but a desire to follow Jesus and to do that in the most excellent of ways.”



Karlsson’s beloved music transcends all generations and even multiple genres, yet the most significant aspect of her ministry is the fact that she remains grounded in her faith.

“(Galatians 5:6 ...) the only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love,” Karlsson recites. “I re-

ally want that to be said of my life, that my faith will be exposed through love for everyone, whether it's the person that lives across the street or the folks I meet at the grocery store or my family or the folks I go to church



with or see in ministry events. I want people to sense God's love working through my faith and to me. That's really important."

For more information on Karlsson's music and ministry, visit www.eviemusic.org and her Facebook page

at www.facebook.com/Evie-Music-139517256059444.

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The Editor's Last Word

By Lorraine Walker

It's September already and I feel like summer hopped on a skateboard this year. It used to be that September was the big month in Southern Gospel music, but with large events happening all year long now, September isn't what it used to be. October is the big month now as Creekside Gospel Music Convention is held in Pigeon Forge. SGNScoops' staff are in excited preparation for that event and we hope that all of our readers will join us at the Smoky Mountain Convention Center.

Before I go any further, I need to express my excitement at having the Goodman Revival members on our cover. Goodman is a name that has long been synonymous with Southern Gospel. When I met Tanya Goodman Sykes briefly last year, she was as sweet and generous as she appears to be on the Gaither Video series. Somehow I knew she would be. The sound and performance of this group is also the same as the old clips of the Goodmans that you might see on TV. I love it when people you admire turn out to be the same in real life. That's the way all of our Gospel music artists should be and I know that many are authentic. As Christians we should all be the same no matter where we are, no matter how difficult that might be to achieve. Perhaps for most of us it is a goal to strive for, something we have not yet attained.

Another goal to strive for, is that of unity as believers, and love for our neighbors. Jesus told us to love one another even as He loved us. That is a huge goal to

attain, and I'm sure I've got a long way to go. My desire is that we as Christians look beyond any political biases and begin to love each other regardless of our differences. Race, color, creed...does it make a difference when Jesus said to love your neighbor? I recently stepped out of my comfort zone when I placed a sign on my front lawn that said, "Love everyone, always." That has forced me to be more open with my own neighbors and it is in the back of my mind when someone cuts me off in traffic, or when I have difficult interpersonal relations with someone I don't understand. I have a long way to go but I know I'm on the right road. Are you or do you let cultural or political biases keep you from seeing others as Jesus sees them?

SGNScoops is determined to continue to bring you everything unique and interesting in the world of Gospel music, regardless of any differences some might see in our artists. Please let us know if there is someone you think should be highlighted within our pages.

On a final note, you may have noticed that SGNScoops is looking more streamlined. We are trying to keep the final downloadable file a little more lean for those that like to save each issue, so it does not take so long to download. Is there anything you would like SGNScoops to talk about or review, or is there something we do that you don't like? Please bring any of your comments, questions or critiques to me and we will talk about it. You can email me at lorraine@sgnscoops.com. Hope to see you at Creekside 2017.

Contributors

SGN SCOOPS



Rob Patz is the President and CEO of Coastal Media Group. Rob has an 18 year history in radio hosting the nationally syndicated radio show, "The Southern Styles Show" since its beginning in 1993. Rob is also the owner of the internet's #1 Southern Gospel station, SGMRadio.com. In 2009, Rob Patz acquired SGNScoops.com, including the all- digital Scoops Magazine and the Diamond Awards. Rob has taken part in several Christian television projects working in front of the camera and also has helped create several syndicated television programs as well. Rob does voice work for various outlets including fortune 500 companies as well as emceeing concerts and special events. Email Rob at rob@sgnscoops.com.



Stephanie Kelley is a public speaker and owner of Queen-O-Q, a blog featuring coupon match-ups, freebies, samples and information on frugal living. She is married, has three children and lives in Washington State. Queenoq.blogspot.com



Canadian-born Lorraine Walker has a love for Jesus Christ, music and writing. The combination of these passions has produced artist features and monthly columns for Southern Gospel publications including SGM Radio website and SGN Scoops Digital magazine. Lorraine desires that the power of the written word will glorify her Lord and bring readers closer to the love, peace and majesty of the Almighty. Email Lorraine at lorraine@sgnscoops.com



Jennifer Campbell is a singer, songwriter, musician, and middle school English teacher from McAlpin, Florida. Along with her passion for teaching, she has an even greater passion for ministering to others, sharing her testimony of how she was born lifeless and how Jesus raised her up to live for Him. Jennifer is a member of the Florida Worship Choir and Orchestra and has performed with them at Brooklyn Tabernacle, Carnegie Hall, Central Park, and Times Square. She serves as a group leader for Women of Faith, designs websites, and writes an inspirational blog at <http://jennifercampbell.net/blog.htm> and a food and travel blog at <http://jennifersjourneys.net> Learn more about Jennifer at <http://jennifercampbell.net> and www.christwillreturn.org.



Joan Walker grew up with music in the house and first heard Southern Gospel in her early teens. With almost a quirky (some may say 'weird') need to make sure words are spelled correctly and the apostrophes are in the right place, she enjoys proofreading the articles for the SGN Scoops magazine each month...and looks beyond the letters and commas to the wonderful words each writer has written. Joan counts it as a blessing in her life to be part of SGN Scoops!



Justin Gilmore, 22, a resident of San Diego, California, graduated from Point Loma Nazarene University with a B.A. in History in June of 2014. Passionate about Southern Gospel music and its history, he decided to venture into the blog world in January starting Southern Gospel Spotlight in order to share his love of this great style of music.

Contributors

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Dusty Wells is a man of many talents and multiple skills, from his speaking engagements across the country, to traveling and encouraging various artists in the Christian music genres. Dusty has a passion that is evident from the moment you meet him.

Dusty is a man who remains passionate and secure in the calling and destiny upon his life. He has come to realize the importance of finding purpose and clear direction for not only his life, but also the lives of those he comes in contact with, no matter what stage of life they may be in. Growing up in a very dysfunctional home, surrounded by all types of abuse, Dusty had every excuse to be a failure in life. He grew up on welfare, having to steal his daily necessities of life at times, being surrounded by drugs, alcohol and pornography. He was raised by a mother who was married multiple times, living in a housing project on the wrong side of town. But in the midst of what seemed to be complete devastation, God had different plans of success for Dusty. At the age of 14, a precious couple took time out of their own lives to invest in Dusty...thus leading Him to the Lord. His life is a testimony of God's relentless love and deliverance, and is one of the most triumphant stories told in modern Christianity. Dusty is confident in the fact that if God can do it for him, He can do it for anyone, no matter the situation.

Dusty and his wife of 33 years have four children, and two grandbabies with one more on the way. They make their home in Nashville, Tn.



Justin McLeod is the founder of the Justin's World of Softball website, a site that he has built into one of the premier news outlets in the sport. Justin is a longtime Gospel music fan and enjoys researching the history of the genre, attending concerts, and review-

ing recordings whenever possible. The son of a Southern Baptist pastor, he also works for a law firm as a legal secretary and is active in his local church. Justin is a native of Memphis and now resides in Northeast Louisiana.



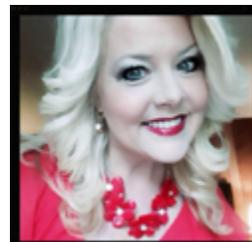
Pete Schwager is a web developer and graphic designer with a passion for Christ. He was born in Santa Rosa, California and moved to Oregon where he spent most of his life. He now lives in the quiet town of Ringgold, Georgia and enjoys living in the country with his family.

You can find him online at <http://peteschwager.com>



Staci Schwager helps with marketing and communication with her husband's web design company, Cre8able Media. Together they make a great team! Staci being the "talkative" one, loves being able to communicate one on one with clients and organizing

ideas. While Pete on the other hand is diving into the design and coding aspects to make the real masterpiece! Most of Staci's days are filled with preparing homeschool lessons for her kids, couponing, gardening, tending to her chicken flock and spending as much time on the beautiful, country land God has blessed them with.



Vonda Easley is the Vice President of Sales and Marketing. Vonda draws on a vast knowledge of Southern Gospel Music for her expertise in the field. In addition to her many personal friendships within the industry she also hosts a weekly radio show which keeps

her in touch with many of Southern Gospel's leading executives and artists. It also allows her a fresh view of new music and the latest happenings inside the industry. Vonda is also a group owner and manager as well! A self starter Vonda has started and managed several "new" events in Southern as well as "Country Gospel" Music. These events are fast be

coming trend setters within the industry. She is a graduate of The University of Alabama at Birmingham.

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Robert York- During my childhood days my parents took me to the Atlanta City Auditorium for concerts hosted by Warren Roberts. That was the beginning of my love for Southern Gospel music. After 35 years I retired from USPS, during which time I got married. My wife and

I often went to The Joyful Noise for dinner and concerts. Every known name in Gospel Music sang there at one time or another. After I retired, we decided to start promoting concerts. Our goal was not only to promote our concerts, but also to promote any Gospel concerts in our area and attend as many as we possibly could. I came to a crossroads in December 2013 when my wife graduated to heaven, not knowing what to do. After much prayer God led me to continue promoting concerts. Have promoted around 100 concerts and can't tell you how many I attended. I still enjoy going to concerts and writing a little about the groups.



Erin Stevens is a uniquely talented shutterbug, singer, guitar player, writer, blogger, and social networker. She is the owner/operator of Photos For Keeps By Erin. Along with running her own business, she is the official photographer for Abraham Productions (API). You will find her behind the lens at all API events, along with

working behind the scenes on their social media. She also travels full-time on the road with her family's gospel group, The Stevens Family. Photography is her passion and singing for Jesus is her calling. For several years, you have known her as our very own "Younger Perspective" writer. Check out her photography website www.photosforkeepsbyerin.com and her ministry website www.stevensfamilymusic.com.



Vivian is the marketing manager at KKGW in Dallas/Fort Worth Texas, as well as hosting a program on Sundays where she features national, regional as well as local artists. She also brings news of upcoming concert events in the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex and surrounding area. Vivian has promoted various artists in this area for over

10 years beginning with Phil Cross and Poet Voices and later Sharron Kay King and Jerry Bennett to name a few. She has spent the past several years promoting Southern Gospel, Inspirational Country Gospel and Bluegrass in this area in order to preserve this part of our heritage.



Hello, I'm Randall Hamm, Gospel Program Director of WFLQ French Lick Indiana, host of the Sunday Morning Gospel Show for the past 20 years on WFLQ French Lick Indiana and Singing News Top 10 Small Market DJ for the past three years. I now add something new to

my resume! Record Reviewer, ok... CD Reviewer. I'm Old School, having started in the days of LP's, 45's and Reel to Reel along with cassettes as the main form of music played. If you'd like to listen to my program, you can visit <https://www.facebook.com/TheSundayMorningGospelShow> and listen to archived programs, plus I post various Southern Gospel news updates, uplifting music and Gospel-related items. If you're in the six-county area around French Lick Indiana, in the heart of Southern Indiana, tune in every Sunday 6:00am-12:00pm and listen to the Gospel Greats with Paul Heil, 6:00am to 8:00am and the Sunday Morning Gospel Show with Randall Hamm 8:00am to 12:00pm.



After graduating from Middle Tennessee State University with a Mass Communication degree, Craig Harris has been in the journalism field for more than 15 years, working daily as both a photographer and writer at one of the largest non-daily publications in the state of Tennessee. He has experience in feature writing, news writing, action

photography, portrait photography, web-site maintenance and layout. Craig has been a part of numerous awards, both collective and individual honors in the journalism field. He has had articles published in numerous newspapers and magazines on a variety of subjects, most notably in the world of sports.

Craig's Southern Gospel interest dates back for approximately the same time span, having closely followed the industry since the later portion of the 1990s. He also performed for seven years with a local trio prior to joining the SGN Scoops staff.

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David's distinctive sound and his ability to blend perfectly with a variety of vocalists has made him a valuable commodity on live events as well as in the studio. His compassionate and gentle spirit makes him more than an artist, it makes him a great friend!

David began singing at age 6 with family. In 1990, he filled in for the Speer Family and later that year he became the lead vocalist for The Trailblazers. In 2002, Staton filled the lead position with Priority. While with Priority, the group was the resident gospel group at the Silver Dollar City theme park in Branson, MO and they performed for over one million people in one year. After the group disbanded in 1995, David continued to write for artists in many different genres of music while occasionally performing solo. It was during this time that his song, "Every Knee Shall Bow", recorded by Dottie Peoples, was nominated for a Grammy Award. His song, "Together We Can" was adopted as the national theme song to bring awareness to violence in schools. The music video (Together We Can) that featured many Atlanta based artists was shown at the 1999 Grammy Awards show, which helped launch the careers of artists like R&B's Jagged Edge, India Arie, and 4.0. In 2004, David partnered with Mike LeFevre to form The LeFevre Quartet. During the seven years that he was the lead vocalist, the group had many hit songs and won many awards. After leaving the LeFevre Quartet in 2011, Staton began working on a solo project and also began singing with Palmetto State Quartet. The group appeared on television and toured with country music superstar, Wynonna Judd while Staton was there.

Through the years, artists like Gold City, Jeff & Sheri Easter, Kingsmen, Singing Americans, Dixie Melody Boys, Imperials, Dottie Peoples, Ball Brothers, LeFevre Quartet, Palmetto State Quartet, Priority, Trailblazers, The Greenes, Ivan Parker, Brian Free and many more have recorded David's music. From 2005 to 2013, Staton was the Executive Vice President for Song Garden Music Group in Nashville, TN. In recent years, the National Quartet Convention has asked David to be a part of an industry advisory panel to help artists who need assistance and training. Not only has David made a mark as an artist, he is passing on his talent and knowledge to new artists, influencing and shaping the future of Gospel music.



Kelly Nelon Clark is the daughter of Gospel Music icon, the late Rex Nelon. As part of her father's group, The Nelons, she blazed a musical trail bringing a fresh new sound to the traditional Gospel quartet style. That sound and style influenced a generation of Gospel music performers and can be heard today in the styling of

groups like the Martins, Point of Grace, The Crabb Family and more.

As The Nelons broke new ground, the Gospel Music industry repeatedly recognized their excellence. The group won four GMA Dove awards as well as multiple awards from readers of Singing News Magazine. Kelly was named female vocalist of the year on four occasions and received favorite alto vocalist award 3 times. At one time, Kelly was the most awarded artists in the history of the Singing News Fan Awards. The music industry at large also recognized The Nelons with 3 Grammy nominations.

Today, Kelly currently performs throughout the United States, Canada and Europe with her husband and two daughters as The Nelons. The group is featured in hundreds of churches and concerts each year. The Nelons have been part of Gaither Homecoming concerts sharing their music with thousands of Gospel Music fans in sold-out arenas across the country. For more information, visit <http://www.kellynelon.com/>.



Paige Givens is a Christ follower, wife, mother of two boys and kindergarten teacher to 18 five-year-olds. She is a writer, reader, singer, studier, and teacher of words. Paige lives in Hayden, Alabama with her husband of 10 years, Chris Givens, and their sons Parker and Peyton. Paige loves to blog about faith, writing, music, and teaching. Her goal is to serve the

Lord by inspiring others to be who He has called them to be. You can listen to her music and read her devotionals at www.paigegivens.com.

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Nathan Kistler was born on the road and was singing at the age of three years old. He has had the opportunity travel with groups like Southern Gospel's beloved trio the Nelons, and most recently for almost two years with America's Favorite family of gospel music The Hoppers. Nathan has had the privilege to be in 49 states and

24 countries singing about the wonderful story of Jesus Christ our Lord. He has also been a part of three crusades on the National Mall in Washington D.C. and while there, he had the privilege of singing in the Pentagon courtyard twice. Through his father's ministry in Washington, Nathan began his work on the Hill as a ministry partner with different Christian organizations like Faith and Action and more. Nathan is a missionary to Washington and continues to work there during the week while singing Gospel music on the weekends around the country and being an artist in residence at the American Mountain Theater in Elkins, West Virginia.



Selena Day is from Atlanta GA. During her twenties she worked in the field of fashion, as both a make-up artist and model.

Selena became a Christian in her early 20's and then quickly met her husband, Chuck Day, who is a songwriter and recording artist. Selena and Chuck have been in the ministry for 26 years raising

three daughters and homeschooling them while they traveled together as a family. During this time God taught her how crucial intergenerational ministry is for the furthering of God's kingdom. Selena travels the world speaking at conferences with the emphasis on empowering a multi-generation of women to rise up and become everything that God has called them to. Encouraging the next generation of the church to break the walls of limitations in their mind and rise to their full potential. Selena and her husband are life coaches for The World Race, which is an extreme missions trip for adults 21 through 35. They travel every two months somewhere around the world to mentor these missionaries. She and Chuck have been pastoring a home-church for 14 years where they have experienced God moving in community and seeing the body of Christ in action through each other.



Derek Simonis began singing gospel music at an early age, around the piano with his sister,s at home and in church. His mother, an accomplished pianist and music teacher, was his inspiration to sing. Derek was saved at an early age due to the influence of godly, praying parents and a faithful Sunday School teacher.

Derek formerly served as a Youth Pastor and previously sang with Southern Harmony Quartet. For seven years, Derek also served as a Communications Repair Section Leader for the U.S. Army; he was member of the 1/160th SOAR (A) Night Stalkers and served several deployments overseas.

Derek is married to his sweetheart, Jana, and they have two boys, Daniel and Avery. The Simonis family resides in Boise, Idaho, and Derek is the baritone vocalist for Liberty Quartet. His life's verse is Romans 12:1 which says, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Derek's ultimate desire is to give his all in the service of the Lord.



Logan Smith is a 20-year-old with a lot of miles behind him. At the age of three, he would stand in his room with a pencil as a microphone and one of his dad's handkerchiefs singing his heart out to one of the Happy Goodman's songs, such as "I Wouldn't Take Nothing For My Journey Now." At the age of seven, Logan was asked to

sing at a senior's dinner at his grandparent's church. Logan recorded his first CD, "The Journey Begins," at the age of 10 and his latest release, "Hits Before My Time," at age 19. In October of 2008, Logan was invited to sing with The Gaither Homecoming Tour in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina for Gaither Fest. Since that night, he has sung at many different venues with the Homecoming Tour.

As of 2017, Logan has toured all across America, Canada, and has headlined two Norwegian tours. Logan is on the road more now than ever spreading the good news and has no plans of slowing down.

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Roger Barkley Jr. is an award-winning Christian artist and musical evangelist. With multiple charting songs reaching to the top 10, his goals remain the same: to win souls for Christ, use Gospel Music of any kind to reach the world with the Good News, seeing lives changed and being an encouragement to the saints. When asked about his

ministry, Roger said, "I can remember the first time singing with my dad playing the guitar and standing beside my mom when I was four years old. I have always loved all types of music." His vision is to lead as many people to Christ through preaching, singing, sharing testimony, comedy, drama and technology as possible. Having been labeled a Christian Entertainer, he believes it is possible to minister in an entertaining way, and in over 35 years of ministry has found that he can utilize all different types of music to let people know the love of Jesus Christ. Currently he is Artist-In-Residence with his wife, Dianna, and daughter, Chelsea, at Leestown Gospel Church in Frankfort, KY, and Redemption Road Community Church in Stamping Ground, KY where he leads worship when not spreading the Gospel across America.



Fayth Lore is a young woman from southern Ohio with a love for God and people. Although she enjoys chocolate, oldies music and spending time with friends around the bonfire, her passion is ministry. In January of 2014, after pastoring for 20 years, her family decided to follow God's call into music evangelism. In September 2015, they

launched into full-time ministry. The Lore Family travels the country, spreading the Gospel through songs, sermons and seminars. While Fayth loves to sing, she also has a heart for encouraging young women in Christ. She has spoken at various youth/women's events, as well as hosted her own blog for young ladies. To see more about The Lore Family, visit their website at www.thelorefamilyministries.com. To learn more about Fayth's blog, visit www.truepurposegirls.weebly.com.



Debbie Seagraves is a Gospel music soloist, songwriter and speaker from Hull, Ga. She and her husband, Mike have been married for 21 years and have five grown children, including four sons and one daughter that graduated to Heaven in 2009, as well as nine grandchildren. She loves singing, speaking, and writing her own songs. Debbie is

currently working on her third project. All of the songs on this CD will be songs that she has penned. She is an award winning artist, having won Female Vocalist of the Year with Lighthouse Gospel Music Association, and Female Vocalist and Soloist of the year with the GGCBA (Georgia Gospel Country Bluegrass Association) in 2016. She enjoys speaking at Ladies Events, sharing her testimony of how God spared her life from a near fatal motorcycle accident in 2011, how He brought her out of the depths of severe clinical depression, and through the death of her daughter in 2009. Also, Debbie is an avid Georgia Bulldogs fan and loves to fish, read, and spend time with her children and grandchildren. Debbie says: "No one can come as close as I did to dying and have it not change you. I am forever changed, blessed beyond measure, and just so grateful for every day that the Lord allows me to spend with those I love and to serve Him." She considers Micah 7:8 her life verse as she says that verse has carried her through some of the darkest times in her life. If you would like to have Debbie at your church or venue, you can reach her through her website: debbieseagraves-music.com/, on Facebook, or send her an email at: fully-alive1956@att.net.



Jimmy Reno is from Birmingham, Alabama. He began singing in church at four years of age. Jimmy has sung with various groups over the years, until singing professionally for Mark209 and the Florida Boys. Jimmy is married with three children.

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Sarah Murray sings soprano for the Southern Gospel group Bless'd. The group is from Greenville, Tennessee and has been together for over five years. Sarah was born and raised in Jonesborough, Tennessee, but now resides in Greeneville with her husband, Chase. She has a

bachelor's degree in K-6 Education and a Master's degree in Human Resources Development. Her daytime job is being the Human Resources Director for a small company in Greeneville, Tennessee. Her passion outside of singing, writing, and crafting, is simply God's people. "I love the Lord and truly believe my mission in life is to reach his people, and that's both on and off the stage, behind my desk, and in my community. I just want people to see Jesus in me! I'm so honored to be a part of Bless'd and love our tight knit family group." For more information on Sarah, visit blessdministries.com



Kaleb Powell can be found in the small town of Greeneville, Tennessee. He sings baritone for the Southern Gospel group, Bless'd Ministries. Alongside Southern Gospel Music, Kaleb's passion is playing the piano. He started playing at the young age of 13 and for the majority, is self-taught. His style of piano

playing is inspired by artists such as Kim Collingsworth, Jeff Stice, and Gerald Wolfe. He has been singing and playing for Bless'd Ministries for the last six years.

Kaleb is currently the owner and operator of AKM of Tennessee, Inc., which is an organization that provides services to individuals with developmental disabilities. His life has been surrounded by taking care of others and for living out his passion through music ministry.

"I feel honored that God chose to give me the talent He did in playing the piano. I feel that if I can use this to serve Him more, I will perfect my talent to be used as only a vessel for Him. Being a part of Bless'd and traveling with our group is a lifelong dream of mine that I am forever grateful God saw fit to put together. On and off the stage, I want my talent to be only used for Him and to be a part of seeing souls saved." For more information on Kaleb Powell, visit blessdministries.com.