

Christian Community Magazine

***America's Christian
Lifestyle Magazine***

**Michelle Williams
on Depression Battle:
It's Okay to Get
Help**

**Hurricane Harvey &
Ministry Response**

Christian Community Magazine

November 2017

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In The News

California Church Providing Shelter, Necessities to Those Fleeing Wildfires



The wildfires in northern California continue to spread and cause destruction. The death toll is now at 31 people. Additionally, the fires have burned through 170,000 acres of land, destroyed thousands of homes and businesses, and forced 20,000 people to evacuate.

In the midst of this destruction, however, a California church is offering a place of safety. Members of the Influence Church in Anaheim Hills have not only opened the church to those in need, but have opened their own homes.

"During the evacuation, church members and staff helped neighbors move stuff out of their houses. We prayed for those that were in distress during that time. It was like chaos around here," said Pastor Phil Hotsenpiller.

The church is especially close to the "Canyon Fire 2" which began on Monday. This particular fire is reportedly about 60 percent contained.

Pastor Hotsenpiller continued: "We gave out water. We offered housing. We probably had 50 of our members offer homes for people to stay in. If they didn't want to do that, we offered to pay for their hotel. Although we didn't have anyone take us up on the hotel, on the rooms they did."

A coffee shop near the church also offered free coffee to those fleeing the fires.

North Korean Women Defectors are Being Brutally Forced to Undergo Abortions



North Korea is known for its horrific human rights abuses, but yet another report of disregard for human life has emerged.

LifeNews.com reports that North Korea has been forcing pregnant women who return to the country to get abortions.

Captain Park Yong Chol is the head of the Ponchon Ministry of State Security in North Korea and he reportedly is a cruel man with disregard for human life.

According to Daily NK, a South Korean News site, "a female defector referred to as Jeon in her mid 20s, had been living in China for several years. She was repatriated in the middle of May. Jeon was first investigated by the Ryanggang MSS and was then sent to the Pochon County MSS for further investigation. During the investigation, Captain Park, who was monitoring the inspection room, said to the interrogator, 'How did she carry a Chinese baby all the way here?' After realizing the implicit instruction, the interrogator repeatedly struck the woman's belly until the fetus was aborted."

There have been multiple reports of pregnant women being targeted upon repatriation into North Korea.

Another woman who escaped the country told the horrifying story of how she was sold into slavery and forced to undergo an abortion without anesthesia.

Join us in praying for these North Korean women who are facing these harrowing situations. Pray that they would find help, healing, and hope.

Tasha Cobbs Leonard Hits #1 on Billboard With 'Heart. Passion. Pursuit.'



And the sales are in! Check out what the TOP 5 Gospel Artists sold and see where their albums charted on Billboard's Top Gospel Album chart below...

Tasha Cobbs Leonard— "Heart.Passion.Pursuit."

Chart position: #1

First Week Sales: 10,690

Travis Greene— "Crossover: Live From Music City"

Chart position: #2

Weekly Sales: 1,256 / Total Sales: 9,391

Anthony Brown & group therAPy – "A Long Way From Sunday"

Chart position: #3

Weekly Sales: 1,109 / Total Sales: 12,757

Bryan Popin – "I Got Out"

Chart position: #4

Weekly Sales: 929 / Total Sales: 9,952

Sam Roberts & The Levites Assembly

Chart position: #5

First Week Sales: 720

Father of Man Wounded in Las Vegas Shooting Says God Intervened to Save Son's Life

Phil Aurich was one of the victims of the deadly Las Vegas shooting, which took place on Oct. 1. Phil was shot in the left side when gunfire rained down on the attendees of the Route 91 Harvest festival at Mandalay Bay.

According to ABC affiliate station KSTP 5, Phil's family believes it is only through God's grace that he is alive today.

A series of events happened to Phil that night that he and his family believe are evidence of divine intervention. After Phil was shot, his girlfriend insisted he keep running to get out of the line of fire, but when he could run no more, a police officer who was supposed to be setting up roadblocks realized it was more urgent that Phil get to the hospital and took him there.

"I don't know how long he would have lasted if he would have had to sit there and wait," said Phil's father, Mike Aurich.

When Phil arrived at the hospital he was met by Dr. Tim Dickhudt. The doctor knew he had to operate on Phil right away.

"The bullet went in on his left side, and of course it did all that damage when it got inside," Mike continued. "But Tim saw that, and said to the other surgeon, 'This guy's got to get on the table now.'"

"I believe that was God's hands," Mike added. "He calls you when he is ready. And I don't know what he has in mind for Phil. But obviously, he has something left for Phil to do and he chose to spare him."

Oleta Adams



You know the powerhouse voice and the multi-platinum smash hits "Get Here" and "Rhythm of Life." Now experience the incomparable Oleta Adams for an evening of wonderful enchantment and pure entertainment. The Grammy-nominated singer, songwriter and pianist brings the house down around the globe for legions of fans who adore her songs of love, laughter and life. Truly a rare find on the music scene today, the mega-talented Oleta Adams is an ultimate performer for the generations.

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Living the Life



Winter is a dormant season. It's a time when trees become bare and most of the grass, plants and flowers die off. But winter is also a time of preparation—as roots and tree saps respond to soil and temperature changes to prepare for growth that comes in the spring.

In much the same way, you and I go through spiritually dormant seasons. These are the seasons when God seems silent...when our dreams and visions for the future seem lifeless. But although we may not see or feel anything exciting, it doesn't mean nothing is happening. A lot has to happen on the inside of us before we are ready to handle the future God has for us.

Just as winter prepares plants and trees for warmer weather, a spiritually dormant season is a time of preparation—when our inner character is developed and strengthened. Strong character is essential for withstanding storms that come during seasons of growth and harvest. I find there are a lot of people who have the gifts and talents to take them somewhere exciting, but if they don't have strong, Christlike character, all the talent in the world won't keep them there.

God has something planned for you, and if you're not living in the fulfillment of His plan for you, then now is the season of preparation. Rest assured, you're not alone. We all go through times like this. The Bible tells us that even Jesus needed time to grow and increase in wisdom, stature and in years before He was ready to make a global impact through His three-year ministry (see Luke 2:52).

A Season of Preparation

Here are three insights I've learned that can help you make progress toward your goals, plans and visions during dormant seasons.

Examine Your Motives.

When God first called me to teach His Word, I wasn't doing it just because I had a deep desire to help people. I wanted to be somebody. I had problems from my past and was unaware of how insecure I was. I didn't realize how much I got my sense of worth and value out of what I did. And because of it, my motives were way out of line with how God wanted me to be.

It seems that many people don't really know themselves and understand why they do what they do. Self-deception is easy to fall into and one of the hardest things to face. But when we are willing to face the truth about ourselves and examine our motives, God will help us change for the better and get on track with His will for our lives.

Get Out of Your Comfort Zone

Before we can move forward into a new thing, we usually have to let go of something we've been doing awhile. God nudges us outside of our comfort zones toward unfamiliar experiences to encourage us to rely on Him. And all too often, we try to hang on to what is familiar before we have confidence that the new thing is right for us. We wrestle with ourselves, wondering if we really heard from God or if we can really trust Him.

If you keep one foot where you are while the other foot stretches toward someplace new, you will eventually lose your footing and fall over.

Living the Life

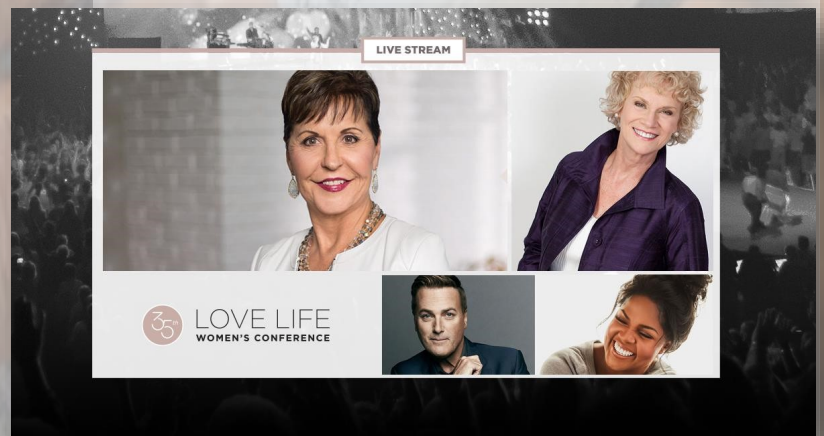
God wants us to trust Him by doing what He wants us to do and going where He wants us to go. We must learn to let go of what we have before we take hold of something new, and learn to rely on God to meet all our needs.

Embrace Discipline

The Bible tells us that “no discipline brings joy, but seems grievous and painful; but afterwards it yields a peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it” (Hebrews 12:11 AMP). Discipline isn’t fun, but it is essential for our character development.

Self-discipline is a fruit of the Spirit that requires time to develop properly. Self-discipline is developed when we do the right thing consistently, over and over again for a long time. It may include paying off debts, not over-spending, getting proper nutrition and exercise, changing the way you speak about yourself and others, and spending quality time with God and in His Word every day. As you become disciplined in every area of your life, you will be better equipped to handle bigger responsibilities in the future.

God has amazing plans for your life! He wants you to fulfill your dreams and live a life of blessing, hope and promise. I hope you’re encouraged today. You will get there—as long as you are willing to do your part and trust God to do His part. And the more you lean on and trust in Him through that process, the sooner you’ll be ready for whatever He has prepared for you.



Michelle Williams on Depression Battle: It's Okay to Get Help



A decade ago, Michelle Williams sang about being a “survivor” – but in fact, she’s only recently found her way through the darkness.

“I’ve dealt with depression,” the singer and actress, 32, tells the Associated Press. “I had to choose to get out of bed and do whatever I needed to do to be happy.”

Williams first suffered from the mental health disorder as a teen, but managed to recover without the use of medication thanks to therapy, exercise and positive thinking.

“We’re taught, ‘Just go to church and pray about it. The Lord is going to heal you,’” Williams explains, adding that she’s opening up about her experience to encourage others to seek assistance.

“Well, in the meantime, I believe God-gifted people, physicians, doctors, therapists – that’s your healing. Take advantage of it. Go see a professional so that they can assess you. It’s okay if you’re going through something. Depression is not okay, but it is okay to go get help.”

With the dark cloud lifted, Williams begins 2013 with a lot on her plate.

Recently GRAMMY®, Dove and Stellar Award-winning gospel artist Tasha Cobbs peeled back the layers of who she truly is and got candid about life, depression, losing her dad and more on Centric TV’s “Being”.

“The depression was something that I had just kind of tried to ignore because it’s not popular,” says the 34-year-old in a clip posted on her official Instagram page. *“And so it was something that I hid.”*

According to the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health, African-Americans are 20 percent more likely than non-Hispanic whites to report instances of serious psychological stress.

Christian psychiatrists say, the more the issue is discussed, the less taboo it will become for affected persons to admit they need help.

We NEED the church to step up in its efforts to be more vocal in regards to mental illness. Whether that be through a sermon series, free resources, creating non-profits or even a cultivating a designated year-long ministry. Regardless, the church should be at the front-lines of this battle. People need a safe place where they can be honest and transparent with what they are going through.

There is nothing wrong with admitting you are depressed, cutting, have attempted suicide or are even contemplating it. There is nothing wrong with seeking medical attention and being prescribed medication to help you along the journey. And there is nothing wrong with admitting you need help.

Anti-trafficking ministry says Christ can restore

Women and girls rescued from trafficking through Christ tend to walk away from the life permanently.

She is Safe is an organization working internationally to free women and children from a life that often claims their lives.

Michelle Rickett leads the organization. While working on the mission field in Africa, she observed many girls were kept at home to work, for marriage, or to sell. She formed She is Safe to help them and says anyone involved in trafficking can be reached.

“No one is beyond the reach of God, whether it's a trafficker, or a madam who's holding slaves, or a perpetrator on the street,” she told OneNewsNow. “Everyone is someone that we ought to be praying for, someone that we ought to be reaching.”

Rickett points to the track record of the two approaches.

“Someone who's been trafficked for many years will find it very difficult to imagine themselves having a life of freedom unless they gain that freedom through Christ,” she said.

“Recidivism in the U.S. for restorative care and overseas is very high in programs that do not address the spiritual need for Christ.”

Those in the secular programs have a higher rate of recidivism.

The goal of She is Safe is to see these women rescued through Christ, connected with a church, mentored by members, and kept under the cover of prayer.

Learn more about this organization at <https://sheissafe.org/>



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By Phil W. Hudson

Dana Fields: “All I Had Were Songs and a Dream”

Both her father and her mother, the retired VP of Mission Effectiveness and Chief Diversity Officer for Pinnacle Health Systems, have doctorates in ministry.

Fields started singing at age three and was active in social and spiritual life at Second Baptist. That included youth choir and music ministry. She joined her school’s jazz ensemble and wrote songs and melodies in her spare time. “Singing for me is just like breathing,” she said.

Over the course of her youth, she thought about becoming a performer, or maybe an actor, or perhaps a designer—“Anything that was creative, I was all over it,” she said. “But the one constant was singing. It was only when I dove deeper into my personal relationship with God did I realize that [my songs were] ‘love language,’ when I would sing to Him and He would give me melody and lyric. That’s when I realized that these are songs for others to be blessed by.”

After getting married, Fields took some formal voice lessons but really learned vocal culture and songwriting from Leonard Caston at Dayspring Ministries in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, where she was a member of the music ministry. A former Motown producer and son of the legendary Chess producer, Leonard “Baby Doo” Caston, Leonard and his wife had moved to Harrisburg and served as worship pastors for Dayspring. Caston served as a music mentor to Fields.

Fields’ entrée as an independent gospel artist was a 2002 EP. Six years later, she released her first full project, *Nothing’s Impossible*. For *A Personal Experience*, her 2016 release of original songs, Fields pulled on a friend named Tim James, an engineer and producer. “He was able to wrap my songs with music,” she said.

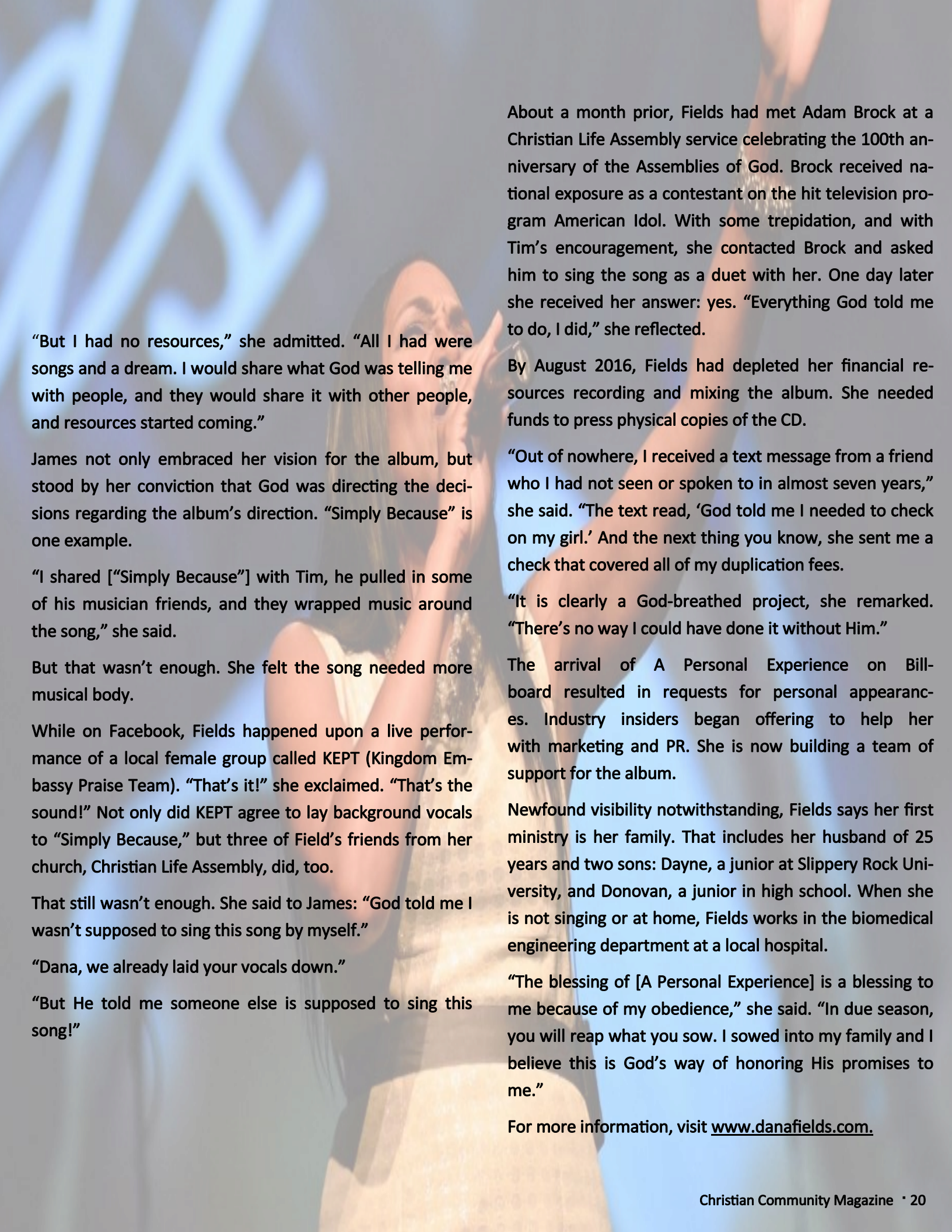
In her kitchen washing dishes one day, Dana Fields began to sing a line in unscripted devotion to God: “I will praise you, simply because of who you are. / In worship I adore you, I will lay my life before you. / At the altar of your throne, I bow to you and you alone.”

The lyric and accompanying melody became the anchor for “Simply Because,” one of the ten songs on *A Personal Experience*. Released last September, the album entered the Billboard Top Gospel Albums chart for one week in June 2017.

The album’s charting took Fields by surprise: “I had no intention of seeking industry approval,” she told JGM. “I’m not looking for fame. I just want to be an obedient child of God.”

Fields described *A Personal Experience* as “an intimate project of love songs between me and God. God told me that there are other people that need to receive the blessing of this project so they might receive healing, encouragement, and edification.”

A self-described PK/DK (pastor’s kid and deacon’s kid), Dana Fields grew up in the Second Baptist Church in Mount Pleasant, Pennsylvania, where her father, once the deacon, is now the pastor.

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a light-colored dress, is singing into a microphone on a stage. The background is dark with blue stage lights.

"But I had no resources," she admitted. "All I had were songs and a dream. I would share what God was telling me with people, and they would share it with other people, and resources started coming."

James not only embraced her vision for the album, but stood by her conviction that God was directing the decisions regarding the album's direction. "Simply Because" is one example.

"I shared ["Simply Because"] with Tim, he pulled in some of his musician friends, and they wrapped music around the song," she said.

But that wasn't enough. She felt the song needed more musical body.

While on Facebook, Fields happened upon a live performance of a local female group called KEPT (Kingdom Embassy Praise Team). "That's it!" she exclaimed. "That's the sound!" Not only did KEPT agree to lay background vocals to "Simply Because," but three of Field's friends from her church, Christian Life Assembly, did, too.

That still wasn't enough. She said to James: "God told me I wasn't supposed to sing this song by myself."

"Dana, we already laid your vocals down."

"But He told me someone else is supposed to sing this song!"

About a month prior, Fields had met Adam Brock at a Christian Life Assembly service celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Assemblies of God. Brock received national exposure as a contestant on the hit television program American Idol. With some trepidation, and with Tim's encouragement, she contacted Brock and asked him to sing the song as a duet with her. One day later she received her answer: yes. "Everything God told me to do, I did," she reflected.

By August 2016, Fields had depleted her financial resources recording and mixing the album. She needed funds to press physical copies of the CD.

"Out of nowhere, I received a text message from a friend who I had not seen or spoken to in almost seven years," she said. "The text read, 'God told me I needed to check on my girl.' And the next thing you know, she sent me a check that covered all of my duplication fees.

"It is clearly a God-breathed project, she remarked. "There's no way I could have done it without Him."

The arrival of A Personal Experience on Billboard resulted in requests for personal appearances. Industry insiders began offering to help her with marketing and PR. She is now building a team of support for the album.

Newfound visibility notwithstanding, Fields says her first ministry is her family. That includes her husband of 25 years and two sons: Dayne, a junior at Slippery Rock University, and Donovan, a junior in high school. When she is not singing or at home, Fields works in the biomedical engineering department at a local hospital.

"The blessing of [A Personal Experience] is a blessing to me because of my obedience," she said. "In due season, you will reap what you sow. I sowed into my family and I believe this is God's way of honoring His promises to me."

For more information, visit www.danafields.com.

Gospel Artist Spotlight

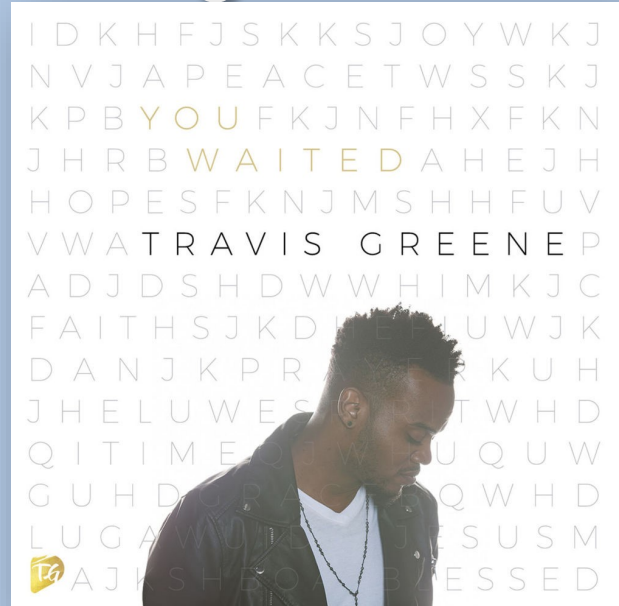
Your monthly round up of Gospel Artists to Watch!

Travis Greene

“You Waited”

WEBSITE: <http://hyperurl.co/YouWaited>

The acclaimed recording artist – who jump-started the year with worldwide buzz and career accolades including 2 GRAM-MY® nominations, and winning a leading 7 awards at the 2017 Stellar Awards – now marks “You Waited” as the lead single from his highly-anticipated upcoming album *Crossover: Live from Music City*.



Koryn Hawthorne

“Won’t He Do It’

WEBSITE: <http://korynhawthorne.com/>

“Won’t He Do It,” ft. Roshon Fegan produced by Rich Shelton, Makeba Riddick-Woods and Matthew Head. Showcasing her confident voice with the artistic delivery that has garnered Koryn widespread praise among both her peers and her fans, she’s considered one of the most exciting new voices for her generation. “Won’t He Do It” is only just the beginning of a line of new music to come.

Tess Henley

Wonderland

WEBSITE: <http://tesshenley.com/>

Soul singer-songwriter Tess Henley began Suzuki piano training at age three, and by age five was dissecting harmonies that even her mother – a singer by trade – found difficult. Multi-Grammy winning producer Don Was (Rolling Stones, John Mayer, Bonnie Raitt) recently selected Henley from over 10,000 performers as the winner of Guitar Center's National Artist Discovery Program.

"She's unlike any artist that's out there now, a world class singer with a true gift" says Was. Billboard describes her music as a classy brand of soulful R&B that could hold up in any era of Was' storied career.



Anthony Faulkner

Guardian Angel

WEBSITE: <http://afaulkner.com/>

Anthony Faulkner is an award-winning International Urban Inspirational Artist. He is a writer, arranger and producer of contemporary gospel, an urban inspirational singer, a director and actor, and steadfast international philanthropist from Houston, Texas.



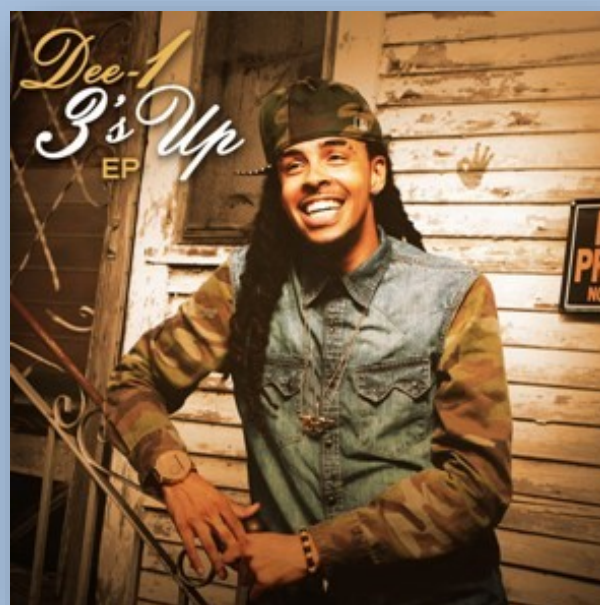
Dee 1

3's Up

Website: <http://www.rcainspiration.com/artist/dee-1/>

Dee-1 honed his lyrical skills while balancing two careers, teaching middle school children by day and performing at rap shows at night. The New Orleans native's love for hip-hop was born while attending Louisiana State University during a year filled with grief and heartbreak.

2005 was a very tumultuous year for Dee-1. First, his world was shaken to the core when his best friend was murdered during a robbery following a flag football game. Second, he experienced the pain of ending a five-year relationship with his high school sweetheart. Third, he watched his hometown of New Orleans endure the catastrophic flooding of Hurricane Katrina. Finally, his life flashed before his eyes when he was the victim of an armed robbery at gunpoint. Despite the difficult year, Dee-1 interpreted these events as a wake-up call to reaffirm his Christianity.



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Profile: Dr. Aretha Wilson

Dr. Aretha Wilson is a dynamic, revelatory author, preacher, leader and teacher. She is recognized as a catalyst of prayer, restoration, empowerment, healing and deliverance for all.

Dr. Wilson is the Presiding Prelate of RAW International Covenant Alliance of Churches and Ministries, Overseer of Kingdom Ambassadors Global Ministries, President of Kingdom Life Bible Institute and Founder and CEO of R.A.W. International Ministries (Remnant Affecting the World for God's Glory). For over 22 years, she has hosted the RAW International Gathering featuring renowned leaders such as Pastor Benny Hinn, Bishop Neil C. Ellis, Perry Stone, Bishop Jacqueline McCullough, Pastor Sheryl Brady and others. Countless lives of pastors, leaders, men, women and youth worldwide have been transformed and enlightened through this conference.

Dr. Aretha Wilson was educated at St. John's University, Adelphi University and United Christian College where she earned a Doctorate of Sacred Theology. Dr. Wilson has also been awarded an honorary Doctorate of Divinity. She is a 20-year veteran bible instructor who utilizes her testimony and life experience with wisdom and knowledge as landmarks to instruct sound doctrine, holiness and righteousness. They are tools of liberation and restoration for nations. Dr. Wilson travels extensively throughout the United States and abroad ministering in conferences, revivals and seminars delivering a challenging and impacting word of the Lord. Throughout the course of Dr. Wilson's career, her desire has been to please God and impact the lives of people from all walks of life for the better.



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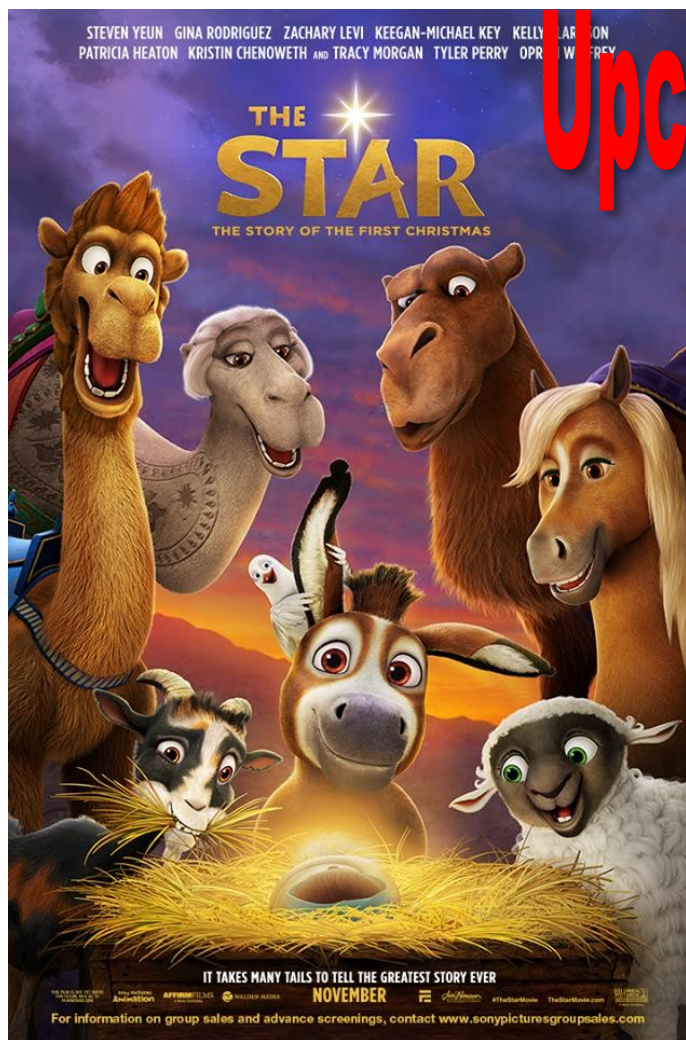
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