


SINGING

Living A Childhood Dream by Nelson Coblentz

A photograph of a man with a beard, wearing a dark vest over a light-colored shirt, playing an acoustic guitar on a stage. He is positioned on the left side of the frame, facing right. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a stage setting with some equipment.

I remember sitting on the wooden floor of our old water pump and telling mom I didn't feel good. The next thing I remember is lying on the kitchen table. People were all around with wet towels, covering my body and trying to relieve my fever. Within hours I became stiff, paralyzed, and unable to walk; so Dad wrapped me in his arms and a friend took us to Aultman Hospital in Canton, OH. The sickness was polio; the year 1952. I was four years old and put in a room with five other children who had polio from the Hartville community. My right side was paralyzed but within two weeks feeling was restored. This little Amish boy became terrified when they covered my bed with a net to keep me from leaping up and running down the hallway. To my knowledge, I'm the only one from that room that was able to walk out on their own strength.

Returning home, frequent visitors would ask me to sing for them in exchange for a piece of gum, candy, or a few coins. My singing career was under way! ☺ Mom and Dad both enjoyed singing, and for Mom it was a natural gifting. She grew up with an alcoholic father and singing was probably one way to cope with that pain. All of us twelve siblings developed a love for singing. Mom taught me to play harmonica by age seven and to sing alto by age nine. Mrs. Furbay, my school music teacher, both nurtured and utilized my desire to sing. On rare occasions our neighbor lady was permitted to bring a wind-up phonograph over and play Lovin Brother's albums.

My first introduction to four-part, spirited singing came in my early teens at Grandma and Grandpa Coblentz's house. The Swartz' – Peter, his siblings and wife Martha, sang with such passion! They hunkered down for hours of hymnbook singing and us young'uns were all eyes and ears. And someone said they also went other places to sing! A dream started developing in my heart. However, at age 15, I was introduced to alcohol. The next nine years, to my awful shame and regret, was spent sowing to the wind. How I wish *that* part of my life was just a dream. I was singing music with the wrong message and my sinful choices grieved God and many others. Some lost hope and said, "you'll never change... an alcoholic just like Grandpa." (Grandpa Miller did receive Christ just months before he died.)

Life didn't really change when Sarah and I got married 'til she was led to the Lord by a Christian friend. Several months later my brother Paul invited us to an outdoor gospel singing in Pinecraft, FL. My soul was convicted as I listened to the singing and testimonies of changed lives. Next, my brother invited me to join him on the flatbed trailer to sing an old Lovin Brother's song. Now I was really miserable, and we soon headed home... I needed more whiskey. The drinking continued Sunday, *BUT* Monday morning my hardened heart became sorrowful and broken as I cried out to God for mercy to save my sin-sick soul. An absolute unexplainable peace came into my heart as I sat in my car

Continued on page 2

SINGING

continued from page 1

that morning along Highway 41 in Sarasota, FL. I asked God to take my life into His hands and heard as it seemed an audible voice, "I have plans for you... but not here..." Later that evening our phone rang... "Nelson, you don't know me, but I was wondering if you ever considered singing with a group?" The presence of God came all over me. I laid the phone on my lap and could not speak. It was Marvin Beachy. Finally, I asked him how he knew I received Christ that morning. Marvin said he hadn't known but he was calling out of obedience to God.

Marvin's vision and obedience brought purpose and direction into my life. It enabled fulfillment of a childhood dream, a dream that moved from my head to my heart. Words



"I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live"

- Psalms 104:33

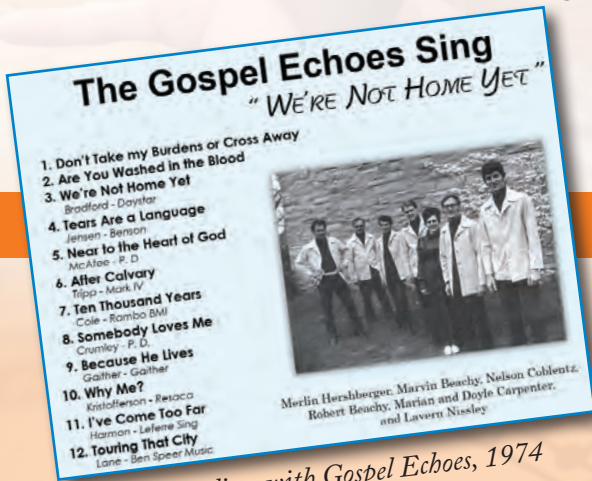
cannot describe the blessing it has been to fulfill this dream with my family and hundreds of co-laborers.

Psalms 40:1-3 became my testimony **"I waited patiently for the Lord; He turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; He set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear the Lord and put their trust in him."**

I'm not a singer like Famous Amos (Raber) and John Schmid, a songwriter like Paul Mark Miller, or a

Facebook fanatic like Steve Stutzman; but I really enjoy singing 😊. These partners in ministry, along with scores of other singers encountered along the way, are my dear friends whom I love and deeply respect. Wholesome music and singing glorifies God, nourishes our soul, and celebrates redemption (Luke 15:25). And then the most holy rendition awaits us in Heaven (Revelation 19).

Maybe your call or affirmation was not exactly like mine, but we are ALL called. Let us be faithful and obedient to the Holy Spirit and so fulfill the visions and dreams God has planned for us.



First recording with Gospel Echoes, 1974



First recording with Gospel Express, 1984



2017

44 Years of Singing...



Most requested song: "Daddy, Please Find a Reason"

Songs sang most often: "But for the Blood" and "Thank You, Mama"

Most challenging yet encouraging song: "When Peace Like a River"

Most divine moments: Singspiration tour, singing with other families/audience in worship.

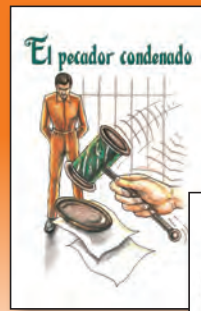


God moments in the studio: When the lyrics so move your heart that tears flow. It doesn't look pretty but the feeling is unexplainable!

Bible Study Courses in... **SPANISH**

For many years we have been receiving requests for a Bible correspondence course in Spanish. The initial research and translation for our most popular course, the 5-book Romans series, started 8-10 years ago. It lay dormant for a few seasons, but in recent years the groundswell continued, and this spring the work was completed.

We don't want to jeopardize our important ongoing English correspondence course ministry; therefore, the decision has been made to "fundraise" before we place our initial order. **The budget for this is \$16,234.** We are also in need of graders who are fluent in Spanish.



How Can You Help?

1. Donate online. Earmark your gift "SPANISH." You can also give through the enclosed response card. Checkmark the appropriate box.
2. Become involved as a grader. Call **828-859-7003** or email biblecourse@gospelexpressonline.org

"Do you have a heart for Hispanic inmate ministry?"

PERSONNEL NEWS

WELCOME



Luronda Hege from Chambersburg, PA has joined the ministry as our General/International Secretary. Her parents are

Reuben and Lois Hege. She brings some valuable secretary experience and her outgoing personality is infectious. She enjoys writing and photography. *Welcome Luronda!*

FAREWELL

Rhonda Zook has served faithfully for the past year as our Bible Course Secretary. We appreciate you *Rhonda!*... and wish you the best as you return to school teaching.



FAREWELL

We say farewell to **Melvin and Doris Yoder**. Doris came six years ago as a Nissley and is leaving as a Yoder! We probably should have put a stop to that whole wedding thing 😊. Seriously now, Doris has done an incredible job at several positions; the past four years as Accounting Secretary, and will greatly be missed. Melvin has served for two years as our Discipleship Materials Coordinator, but his wise ministry counsel and electrical work in our new building is greatly appreciated too. *Thank you, Melvin and Doris!*



**If you have interest in serving with Gospel Express in any capacity please contact Lonnie.
PHONE: **(828) 859-7003**
EMAIL: mail@gospelexpressonline.org

Gospel Express Ministries
Who We Are | Ministries | Online Store | Media | Prayer Requests

Behind the fences, in communities, and the uttermost parts of the earth

ministry of...
Compassion ... Evangelism ... Discipleship

VISIT OUR WEBSITE
WWW.GOSPELEXPRESSONLINE.ORG

Learn more about the ministry, check out the latest news & events, view photos, or submit a prayer request. You can also check out our online store to hear song clips and purchase recordings.

Like and follow our Gospel Express Ministries page on Facebook for the latest announcements and news

Subscribe to our YouTube channel *Gospel Express* to watch video clips

MOVING IN - GLORY TO GOD

We received affirmation for occupancy in our multi-purpose building on July 18! That was a day often discussed in office conversations and often dreamed about. There were many delays and hurdles along the way but in the final 6-8 weeks everything came together. Our first occupant, volunteer secretary Luronda Hege, moved in upon her arrival July 22nd. Alvin Petersheim's, houseparents, then moved in the following week.



Joyful waves from the upstairs deck.

Some additional funds/laborers are still needed as we proceed with yard work, landscaping, concrete work, and parking lot improvements/paving.

We are planning an **OPEN HOUSE** and dedication on **OCTOBER 22** with our Executive Board to celebrate what God has done and to honor all those who have made this expansion possible. This building fills so many needs in the ministry and we are so grateful.



Houseparents apartment (look at those smiles)

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO HAS CONTRIBUTED.

Several Items We Are Still Looking For:

- Bosch or Kitchen Aid Mixer
- Dining Room Table/Chairs for 6-8 People (VS Apartment)



The 1st Bible courses being moved in.

PA Auction Report

O give thanks unto the Lord, call upon His name, make known his deeds among the people. - Psalm 105:1

Glory, honor, and praise to Almighty God for making the 2018 Benefit Auction possible!

The main auction and heifer auction committees have once again worked so hard and brought vision and creativity to make this event all it can be. A big thank you to the Mel Hoover Family for

the sacrifices they make in allowing this event to take place on their grounds. We are grateful for the buyers, donors, food, and car wash workers... and all those who helped. Thank you so much!

These weekend proceeds are approximately 20% of our annual income. 20% of the non-designated profits are



shared with our sister ministries: Living Hope International, Gospel Express Ministries South (Florida), Gospel Express Texas, and Door of Hope.



COMMUNITY TENT REVIVAL MEETINGS

"Wilt thou not revive us again?" - Psalms 85:6a

215 South Shirk Road • New Holland, PA

August 12-26 • 7 PM Nightly

EVANGELISTS

Join us for a noon Prayer Meeting each day at the tent!

For more information visit www.gospelexpressonline.org or call (717) 456-0074



Miller Family



Dave Miller



Nelson Coblenz



Rick Rhodes
Friday Aug. 17



Mel Stoltzfus Family

SINGING GROUPS



Daniel Glick Trio



Stutzman Family



Allen Fisher Band



Amos Stoltzfus Family

Everyone is Welcome!

COME DRINK FROM THE LIVING WATER

HOPE IN CHRIST

AREA REVIVAL

JUNE 3 - 17 - 7:00 PM

ARTHUR, IL

If my people who are called by my name humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

- 2 Chronicles 7:14

The Central Illinois Revival Prayer Team consisted of seven men from various denominations. They had been praying for revival the past 4-5 years. God began to move these men in the direction of holding a public community event. A two-week tent meeting (Hope in Christ Area Revival) was planned for Arthur, IL, and took place June 3-17. A variety of singing groups and speakers were invited with a common cause: to present the Gospel of Jesus Christ

and to disciple and encourage the believer. Nelson, Sarah, and our family were honored to be part of this event for several nights. We were so blessed to see how God honored this vision, birthed out of effectual, fervent prayer. Our churches are in such great need of revival! **Revival is not for the unsaved, however, when revival happens, the unsaved will be reached!** This Prayer Team was willing to step out in faith and obey God with what He put on their heart. *If revival depended on you, your prayers, your faith, your obedience, would your church ever experience revival?*

(Del Fehsenfeld JR)

~Dave Miller

NEW INSTRUMENTAL CD



THE MILLERS

When We're Together

1. How Firm A Foundation
2. As the Deer
3. Ever Be
4. Alter Medley: *Just as I Am / I Come Broken / O Come to The Altar*
5. 'Tis So Sweet
6. Worthy Is the Lamb
7. In Christ Alone
8. When We're Together
9. Draw Me Close / Breathe
10. Be Thou My Vision
11. Redeemed
12. How Great Is Our God

*Order this CD through the enclosed response card or visit our online store.

2018 Fall Banquets

- October 9 & 10 Essenhaus Inn & Conference Center, Middlebury, IN
For tickets, please call 260-463-1706
- October 11 Yoder's Kitchen, Arthur, IL
For tickets, please call 217-259-3303
- October 29 & 30.... Carlisle Village Inn, Walnut Creek, OH
- October 31 Das Dutch Village Inn, Columbiana, OH
- November 1 Location TBD, Meadville, PA
- November 2 Der Dutchman, Plain City, OH
- November 13 & 14 . Shady Maple Banquet Center, New Holland, PA
- November 15..... Franconia Heritage Restaurant, Franconia, PA



More details in next newsletter

Team Schedules

*Visit our website or call the office 828-859-7003 to confirm dates before traveling long distances



Coblentz's



Miller's



Mullett's



Wengerd's



Penner's



Stoltzfus's

NELSON & SARAH COBLENTZ

- Aug 12-26..... Tent Meetings - New Holland, PA
- Sep 2-11 Uganda, Africa (Nelson only)
- Sep 16..... Metzler's Mennonite (AM)
- Sep 18-28..... Ghana, Africa (tentative)
- Oct 9-11 Midwest Banquets (see above)
- Oct 22..... Board Meeting - Columbus, NC

MILLER FAMILY

- Aug 12-26..... Tent Meetings - New Holland, PA
- Sep 9 Gospel Haven (AM) - Millersburg, OH
- Sep 9 Dayspring (PM) - Berlin, OH
- Sep 12..... Grace Church - Meadville, PA
- Sep 13..... Croghan Mennonite Church - Croghan, NY
- Sep 16-19..... Faith Mennonite Church - Wellesley, Ontario (Revivals)
- Sep 20..... Auction Committee Appreciation Dinner - Lancaster, PA
- Sep 21-22..... Softball Tournament - Gap, PA
- Oct 9-11 Midwest Banquets (see above)
- Oct 14..... Anchor of Hope Mennonite Church (PM) - Apple Creek, OH
- Oct 15-16, 18 Freedom Hills Banquets - Walnut Creek, OH
- Oct 22..... Board Meeting - Columbus, NC

MULLETT FAMILY

- Aug 5..... Living Hope Fellowship - Pleasantville, TN
- Sep 27-30..... Prison Crusade - Huntsville, TX
- Oct 21..... Berea Mennonite Church - IN
- Oct 28-31 Metzler Mennonite Church - Ephrata, PA

MERVIN WENGERD BTF = Bondage to Freedom

- Aug 6-10 Warden's Meetings - FL
- Sep 27-30..... Prison Crusade - Huntsville, TX
- Oct 1-2..... BTF Seminars - TX Prisons
- Oct 5-6..... Benefit Auction (GE Texas) - Lott, TX
- Oct 22..... Board Meeting - Columbus, NC

HARBOUR LIGHTS (PENNER FAMILY)

- Aug 17-18..... Women's CC BTF Seminar - Headingly, MB
- Sep 1-2..... Silverstreams Gospel Music Festival - Giroux, MB
- Sep 3-22 Widow's Banquets - Manitoba
- Sep 23..... Peace River Gospel Church - Steinbach, MB
- Sep 24-29..... Widow's Banquets - Manitoba
- Oct 2-Nov 23..... Western Canada Tour (details TBA)

MEL STOLTZFUS FAMILY

- Aug 12-26..... Tent Meetings - New Holland, PA
- Sep 21-22..... Softball Tournament - Gap, PA
- Sep 8 Morning View Mennonite - Singers Glen, VA
- Oct 5-6..... Benefit Auction (GE Texas) - Lott, TX
- Oct 9-11 Midwest Banquets (see above)

Visit our website for updates on scheduling, ministry team news, recordings, and more: www.gospelexpressonline.org

GOSPEL EXPRESS EVANGELISTIC TEAM INC. PO Box 217, Lynn, NC 28750 • 828-859-7003 • mail@gospelexpressonline.org