

Let Your MUSIC SPEAK



MUSIC CAN HELP YOU STRIKE A CHORD WITH OTHERS AS YOU **SHARE WHAT YOU BELIEVE.**

DO YOU SING? DO YOU PLAY AN INSTRUMENT? DO YOU JUST PLAY YOUR IPOD? WELL, NO MATTER WHAT YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH MUSIC IS, THERE ARE WAYS YOU CAN USE IT TO **SHARE WHAT YOU BELIEVE.** HERE ARE JUST A FEW EXAMPLES OF WHAT LATTER-DAY SAINT TEENS ARE DOING TO **SHARE THE GOSPEL WITH MUSIC.**



ROCK ON

Many teens in rock bands would probably tell you that playing rock 'n' roll is its own reward. Beyond that, they probably don't feel they really need a reason for doing it. Well, when six friends in Colorado, USA, formed a band together (Dani K., Jake G., Joey B., Matt N., Michael B., and Scott L.), they set higher goals, and because of that, they also had greater rewards.

For one thing, they wanted their music to lift rather than degrade. "We know that there's a lot of filth we could be playing," says Michael, "but we choose only songs that are clean and uplifting." And Jake adds, "The music we've written is uplifting and clean (not to mention catchy and fun!), inspiring people to build their talents in a manner that will bring others unto Christ."

In addition, they wanted their band's behavior to make an impression—in a good way. "I remember when we walked through the studio doors the first day of recording," recalls Dani, "and our producer was shocked that we were on time, awake, and sober."

Matt adds, "We have covenanted with God to stand as a witness of Him at all times. We have been given wonderful gifts and opportunities, and I want to use them to share the message of the Savior with the world."

The band has also been able to fulfill their goal of serving others in a variety of ways. For instance, they have performed at firesides and other Church events, and they have performed for the sick and injured, both in small, intimate settings and at big fundraising events for large organizations. One of those organizations is special to the band, since it helps those with type 1 juvenile diabetes,

a disease that Jake has had since age four and that Dani was diagnosed with two years after joining the band.

"Our band friends are aware of our medical needs and help us endure the trials we face with the disease," says Jake. "The band has been such a blessing to us and strengthened our friendship."

Their friendship has extended beyond the band experience as well. They've been together at Eagle Scout projects and other major milestones in each other's lives. And their friendship will continue even after they go their separate ways for missions and college.

"My fantastic friends in this band have helped me to live the gospel," says Joey. "This band has given me strength to overcome temptation. I have a testimony of the power and influence that good friends can have."

And Scott believes that their band "is proof that living the gospel can be done anywhere. That is a great comfort to me."



BIG-BAND ALTERNATIVE

When Megan M. of Utah, USA, was younger, she would often hear the same thing whenever her older brother and sister went to school dances. “They’d always go to the dances and then come home and complain about the music,” she says. “Dance after dance, I’d hear them complain.”

As she was approaching the age when she would be able to attend school dances, she wasn’t sure she wanted to go. One day, at a fireside where her stake president was talking about the influence of music, she “had a strong feeling that something had to

be done about my high school dance music. I got straight to work.”

Megan, who plays alto saxophone in the school’s jazz band, noticed how much fun people had at their annual event featuring big-band music and dancing. The thought came to her, “What if the jazz band could play at the homecoming dance? Kids could then dance to an alternative choice of live music instead of disk jockey recordings. They could actually feel the influence of great music at a high school dance and have a great time!”

Her band instructor loved the idea and helped her get it approved through the school administration. Then Megan asked alumni band members to play so that current band members could enjoy the dance.

On the night of the dance, the DJ and the jazz band were set up in different areas. At first, only a few people wandered over to the jazz band, but eventually there was a huge crowd. Some of Megan’s Latter-day Saint friends came by to say hello and then went over to the area with the recorded music. But about five minutes later, they came back.

“I ran over to them and asked why they had come back,” says Megan. “They told me they couldn’t feel the Spirit listening to the DJ music, so they decided to return.”

They weren’t the only ones who had this experience. Megan says, “The next day, I got emails from some of my friends saying, ‘Can we please do that at every dance?? Please!!!’ I even heard that the administration said it was the best school dance they’d ever had.”

RESTORATION SONG

Ariana O. of Queensland, Australia, along with several other students in her music class at school, was given an assignment to compose a song about something uniquely American. “I had a few things going around in my head,” says Ariana, “but the Restoration stood out to me the most. It was something I was passionate about and something I am very proud to be a part of.”

On the Friday after she finished writing the song, the teacher told the students that they would perform their songs the following Monday. “When I went home that evening, I practiced whenever I could so that I could surprise Mum and Dad with what I wrote the song about,” says Ariana. “I had to wait the whole weekend, and I was a

little bit scared as well. I didn’t know how my classmates would react, and I didn’t want them to think I was weird.”

On Monday, the teacher announced the performances. As it turned out, only Ariana and one other group had actually written a song.

“I was nervous,” she says. “One group wrote a song about cowboys and Indians, and I wrote a song about Joseph Smith. The group who wrote their song about cowboys went first, and they were just as nervous as I was, but there were two of them performing. When it was my turn, I said a little prayer and went to the piano. I started playing, and it was like it was just me and the piano. Once I finished, I explained what the song was about, and then I sat back down.”

Though Ariana wasn’t sure how the others felt, she was glad to have shared her testimony in that way. And, she says, “I knew that I had grown spiritually.” **NE**



HOW CAN YOU SHARE THE GOSPEL WITH MUSIC?

Here are more ways that other LDS teens have used music to share the gospel.

- Organize a youth concert and invite friends and neighbors to attend (see an example at [lds.org/go/concertNE2](https://www.lds.org/go/concertNE2)).
- Be a DJ for a dance and play only good, uplifting music.
- If appropriate, play your instrument in church.
- Lead music in church (see [lds.org/go/conductNE2](https://www.lds.org/go/conductNE2)).
- Learn to play the organ, and accompany the congregation in sacrament meeting (see [lds.org/go/organNE2](https://www.lds.org/go/organNE2)).
- Compose music or write songs that are beautiful and uplifting.
- Use your musical talents to uplift the sick, elderly, disabled, or others in need (see [lds.org/go/visitNE2](https://www.lds.org/go/visitNE2)).
- Sing in church—either a solo, in a choir, or just in the congregation, with gusto.
- If school dances play degrading music, organize an alternative dance (see [lds.org/go/danceNE2](https://www.lds.org/go/danceNE2)).
- Practice Church music with your music instructors (see [lds.org/go/pianoNE2](https://www.lds.org/go/pianoNE2)).

What other ways can you think of? Share them with us at [newera.lds.org](https://www.newera.lds.org). Just click “Submit Your Work.”