

## MUSIC WITH A MISSION

by Christina Fowler

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Wayne Drain recently returned from a trip to Manaus, Brazil - the mouth of the Amazon, where he worked alongside other volunteers from the Ray of Hope organization to improve the lives of residents in jungle villages.

In one instance, the group came upon a family living in a floating house, who had only a fish head to sustain them. The group was able to provide the family with enough food and educational supplies for an entire month.

By building schools, the organization is able to not only improve the lives of residents by providing them access to an education, but also spread the message of Christ.

"All the people come together at the schools, " Drain said.

Drain shared how one group became approximately 80 percent Christian after a school had been built in their area.

"It's pretty incredible," Drain said.

Drain added the group built a school in an area the Brazilian government didn't know people were even living there. By working with the government, they were able to help the people receive stoves, freezers and a generator through a government program.

Money for this and many other mission trips of its kind are raised by way of proceeds from record sales of albums released on the KingsWay Music label, based out of the United Kingdom. A percentage of all money made is used to help those suffering in poverty around the world.

Drain has been writing music for KingsWay since 1986, and has since recorded 12 albums.

He is currently a member of the Hudson Taylors (named after the first missionary to go to China) that performs at events throughout the world.

"It's about going to all the nations," Drain said.

With the group, he had the opportunity to perform in one of the biggest open-air Christian concerts ever held - "Jesus Champion of the World" at Wembley Stadium.

He will return to Europe this summer to perform with the band in the "Calling All Nations" concert to be held July 15 in Olympic Stadium in Berlin, Germany. According to organizers, this "Live Aid" styled event is expected to draw approximately 75,000 Christians around the world.

"We're hoping to fill it (the stadium)," Drain said.

Besides to opportunity to listen to great contemporary Christian music, money raised will be given organizations such as World Vision and many others. Those attending will also be encouraged to sponsor a child for one year.

"We want the youth of the world and the young at heart to make a commitment through prayer, praise and giving help in the fight against AIDS and world poverty, said Noel Richards, "Calling All Nations" event organizer and Drain's Hudson Taylor bandmate.

The event will include musicians from around the world including Graham Kendrick and Delirious from the United Kingdom, Reuben Morgan from Australia, Brian Doerksen of Canada, David Ruis of the United States, I Themba of South Africa, Inside Out of the Netherlands, and many more from Switzerland, Germany, Korea, Slovakia, Italy, Czech Republic, Brazil and France.

Besides preparing for his trip to Berlin, Drain is also anticipating the release of his latest CD, "Treasures, The Definitive Wayne Drain Collection." This latest work gathers together a collection of his best songs, and follows his journey of salvation, his search for truth, and desire to spread God's word around the world. "Treasures", which was recorded in Nashville, Tenn., and London, England, features 10 favorites and introduces two new compositions by Drain.

According to a press release provided by C.M. Boutz, "All the songs are 'God-inspired,' Drain emphasizes. In recent years, Drain has embraced his Cherokee and Scottish heritage which is reflected in his music. In Drain's arrangement of 'Be Thou My Vision', his Scottish heritage is evident in the use of the bodran drum and lilting Celtic fiddle music at the end. Drain's Cherokee heritage comes through in the rhythmic drums beats of the songs 'Waterfall' and 'Every Tribe'. And there's a slice of Nashville in the toe-tapping 'Dancing With the Father'."

Drain was even bestowed an honor by the Cherokee nation for "Waterfall". Drain used the Cherokee tradition of writing about things that can be seen, but he wrote it in a way that describes the feeling of the Holy Spirit.

Drain presented the song to tribal leaders in Oklahoma, who later visited Fellowship of Christians and presented Drain with a traditional blanket. Tradition states that by having the blanket, if he were to ask any member of the tribe, they must receive him and feed him. The blanket is currently on display at the church along with photos of the leaders' visit to Russellville.

The "Treasures" collection was released in Europe this month under the KingsWay Music Label, and will be released in June in the U.S. by EMI. It can be ordered now by logging onto Wayne Drain's website at [www.waynedrain.com](http://www.waynedrain.com). Until its official release, a limited number of copies may be purchased at the Copper Pig, Thy Word Christian Bookstore, and at Fellowship of Christians.

Although he records albums and performs at a few events throughout the year, his main focus is work as full-time pastor at Fellowship of Christians.

The church stemmed from a movement sweeping across the nation in the early 1970's that sociologists dubbed the "Jesus Movement."

In 1972, Drain and his wife witnessed hundreds of students at Arkansas Tech University dedicate their lives to Christ.

"No one was in it for the money or the fame in those days. It was all about something higher." Drain writes on his web site. "It was about playing music for someone else's glory. It was about using music as a tool to get a message out that a lovesick father sent His only son to seek and save all those broken, lonely people who were looking for some meaning and purpose for their lives."

The couple began hosting meetings in their home located near the campus and eventually the church grew out of these meetings. Drain said the church's name was a reflection of the wide range of denominations represented by the group, and stressed the church's openness to all members of the Christian faith.

Since its establishment, the church experienced incredible growth. It moved to its current location on Sparksford Drive eight years ago.

Besides assisting missions around the world, the church also works with area non-profits to help those here in the Arkansas River Valley." The church has two "teams" that work in the community - the "E" Team (Evangelism Team) headed by Diane Abington, and the "B" Team (Benevolence Team) headed by David Eslick.

Drain resides in Russellville with his wife June. The couple have three children, Christopher

Drain who is attending the University of Kentucky; Esther Gifford, who is employed as a buyer for Wal-Mart and resides in Fayetteville; and Rhian Drain, a graduate student at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville. Esther and Rhian have also helped establish a church in Fayetteville.