

## 20 Years

20 years: January 8, 1990--January 8, 2009

### Our Future:

WOW! 20 years. I, for one, would have never thought it would have lasted so long. We started the station to be an encourager to believers in 1990, never thinking far enough ahead to think that we would be encouraging our original listeners' children some twenty years later. That a new generation of believers would be added to those people that have already joined with us in praising and singing hymns to God over FM 104.5 was never imagined. And certainly we did not know that doing this simple thing would have continued to find a home here in 2009.

It has been our purpose to provide an environment of celebration for our salvation and do that in a way that included the most people. We started out to celebrate what we all, as believers in Christ, have in common with one another and gather together each day on the radio and occasionally in a concert to enjoy our faith and enjoy being together to cheer each other on. Now, after all those years we still do that same thing and celebrate in those same ways through this radio ministry.

There is a trite saying that many have used before. It goes like this: 'This is your radio station.' We have tried to make that more than words but true to our listeners for all these years. Every decision, each attempt to inspire, has been our obligation to do what we think will be a blessing to our listeners, not to do just what we want to do personally. We are about to enter another 'great adventure' this coming year. We have made significant financial decisions that obligate us to being vulnerable economically and at the same time offer a tremendous opportunity to, again, bring you the very best programming and events for Christian encouragement we can muster. We've made that kind of decision with our eyes wide open. We know this is a time when we could draw back and give up some of the many opportunities we have to continue an aggressive ministry of encouragement. The future does not look so inviting, but you know, it did not look so inviting 20 years ago. Two national ministries had publicly failed because their moral and ethical way was lost in personal greed and abuse of the Christian community. However, we continue to trust and believe that God has inspired us, set us here to encourage the church no matter the conditions that are around us. In fact, our future might be the very most important time for this ministry to be here. It could be a season of increased ministry in a time of decreased worldwide security.

As I think about where we are at some 20 years later, I'm aware of WBVN having 'guarded the trust.' We've had the opportunity to share the Gospel message. We've held on to it as a great treasure to be given to others. We have not abused the opportunity or taken it for granted. We have been careful, thoughtful about what we do and deliberated about how we do it. We know exactly Who has given us this chance to encourage the Body of Christ, and we recognize the challenge to not squander the chance to be an ambassador for Christ in these communities. We know exactly how your faithfulness to God and to this ministry plays a very significant role in our being here at all. We have been responsible to keep the vision of this ministry and not get lost in all the trappings of 'radio.' We continue to look to our listeners to motivate us each day and inspire us in the effort it takes to continue to bring you this ministry. We took huge risks to start this ministry in 1990, knowing that huge things were possible if we did take those risks, things that we could not even imagine in 1990. Had we not lived out of our hearts those early years, all the things that have been a vital part of our ministry would have never had the chance to take place through this ministry. We've had over 76,000 concert attendees, producing 118 events through the latest Big Daddy Weave tour. We have experienced tears and cheers, and changed lives during those events. We've had the rare opportunity to film Mark Schultz's DVD, that was a gift for us all and a gift we could never have experienced without the partnership of our listeners and this ministry. Many people have shared financially to support this ministry for 20 years. With your help, WBVN has provided Christian encouragement for over 1.5 million minutes of programming and hours of gathering together for those 118 events.

At the station, amateurs have been able to provide a radio ministry (certainly no experts) with the help of terrific volunteers and employees that give more than they take from this ministry. The heavy lifting is done during our fundraisers by regular folks: a freight company owner, a handful of housewives, a commercial contractor, a car-body man, a teacher, copier salesman, a gymnastics instructor, a mother of 2, mother of 1, and a mother of 5, a daycare center owner, and a home school family of 6 to illustrate just a few. Well, you get the picture. No hired guns here, just local people that have a passion for the ministry provided here. Most of the time, we are not very good at fundraising. We take our share of criticism for being so silly and having too much fun during the Fall and Spring Celebrations. However,

we are light-hearted about the fundraising because we want to be so careful not to be too heavy-handed in our fundraising. While we are weak at it, you will never hear us promise anything we cannot deliver and never say anything just to make sure we're successful at fundraising. However, we hope to be successful at encouraging people to be givers for the Gospel's sake. To give for the simple reason that they give to God and not to us. Every conversation that I have in my office is a conversation about what to do and how to do it with our listeners as the subject of that conversation.

We enter our 20th year facing unstable economic times and an uncertain future. However, our commitment is to stay on purpose, to act on the vision of this ministry. We have arranged for one of the premier vocalists in the world to be here on January 10th. Christy Nockels is unlike any other performer with a unique voice and terrific purpose in ministry, having toured the country with the Passion Worship ministry. We would be shrinking back from our promise to do such events and would be cowardly to not take the opportunity to bless this community of believers for this coming year. We would be shying away from doing the best we can do for you. Akin to David, as believers we run to the battle rather than running away. We will have Michael O'Brien minister to us this February, a homecoming of sorts for Michael, having performed here for so many years with NewSong. March gives this ministry a chance to encourage and bless families with the VeggieTales performance of "God Made You Special." That production is expensive, and it's lots of hard work. But, it's loaded with potential ministry to children and their families. Not to do those events, to let that opportunity go on down the road, would be akin to us moving away from our pledge to give our lives away for the sake of the Gospel. We could quietly shrink back from doing the best for our listeners, but it would be a violation of the trust you have placed in us for those 20 years. We came to do the best we can do to encourage this community of believers.

Financially, WBVN is a month to month ministry. Somehow that has grown to 228 months so far. We're vulnerable to the culture and the economic climate we find ourselves a part of. We have chosen to spend our time celebrating the Gospel, exercising our Faith, and being an encourager of the Body of Christ. We pledge to so do as long as we can, as carefully as we can, and as thoughtfully as is possible for us. Having a testimony of 19 years is terrific. The opportunity to have spent the time together each day on the radio or at those 118 events has created a great respect from this ministry toward our listeners. In 2009, we have already scheduled community Christian events for January, February, March, April, May, June, September, November and December. Now, in these times, is the time 'to show forth His praises'; now is the season to draw close in rather than to scatter and hide. Today is the day of Salvation and this is the very moment that this ministry is to do even more encouragement than probably anytime before. We trust you will join us in that. We ask for your support and prayers. We started this ministry on January 8th, 1990, with a short scriptural reference on our newsletter. 'For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard (Acts 4:20).' We are still about that today. Twenty years ago we knew that we came for one reason and one only. We are not to teach, although teaching is fundamental to the Christian Faith. We did not come to declare a doctrine, although choosing a doctrinal point of view is a proper thing for Christians to do. We came to encourage the Body of Christ, and encourage it is what we have done and continue to do, even more aggressively today.

Thank you for all the kindnesses, the nice words over those years. Thank you for your trust with your financial gifts. Your attendance has provided some moments of 'super' praise at some of the concert events. 2009 looks to be the most active and a year with the most potential to make a difference in people's lives since we began the station 19 years ago. We look forward to a refreshing of celebrating Christ through WBVN, FM 104.5.