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‘The Lord called me to do this’

Christian recording artist Laura Kaczor shares her faith with the people of North Alabama

By Catherine Godbey

Laura Kaczor does not dream of fame and fortune. The Christian singer-songwriter defines success not by how much money she earns or how many albums she sells but by how many people she can tell about God’s love.

“Everything I write is given to me by God, either through something I experienced or a reading in the Bible. I spend a lot of time on the chorus, getting just right what I want to say, what message I want to give people,” Kaczor said.

It is a message with potential to reach millions, by radio, concert and the Internet.

Kaczor brought her message live to North Alabama this weekend at local churches and schools in hopes of inspiring and encouraging listeners and spreading God’s word.

Today, she will serve as the guest worship leader at Central Baptist’s 10:30 a.m. service and stage a free 6 p.m. concert at the church.

“I want the people in the audience, for their hearts to be ministered to,” she said. “I want to give them encouragement and have them understand more fully how God feels about them.”

Kaczor believes God guided her every move, from attending the University of Pennsylvania, where she sang in the gospel a capella group, to the Bible-inspired song lyrics she writes.

“The Lord called me to do this. I am just so honored to be able to do it and be able to minister to others in my own way,” she said.

Growing up in a church-going family in Pennsylvania, Kaczor sang old gospel hymns in the choir. Not until high school, when the then 17-year-old attended Creation Festival, a four-day contemporary Christian music event, did Kaczor understand how music could change lives.

The pop beats, lively atmosphere, rock bands and Christian message — the music infiltrated her soul.

“Up to that point I had only been to traditional services. It was amazing. It was a totally transformative experience,” Kaczor said. “It set me on fire for serving the Lord. There was a switch turned on.”



Courtesy photos

Christian recording artist Laura Kaczor performed twice this weekend in North Alabama, with an additional concert set for today at 6 p.m. at Central Baptist Church. She will also serve as guest worship leader at the church’s 10:30 a.m. service.

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The switch never turned off.

At Penn, Kaczor started writing lyrics and recording songs. In 2006, two years after graduating with a degree in economics and finance, Kaczor felt pushed by God to Nashville.

"It was hard. All my family lived in Pennsylvania, I had been in Pennsylvania my whole life. I would be the first person to leave the fold. But I knew God was calling me there," Kaczor said.

In Nashville, Kaczor met six-time Dove Award-winning Don Koch, who produced "Love Enough." Kaczor's second full-length Christian album, released in September 2010, registered two top 20 songs on the Christian music chart.

But that does not matter to the soft-spoken performer.

"Success is not about fame and fortune. One person that relates to a song I've written is success to me," Kaczor said. "It's easy to get away from that with all the lights and charts and equipment. It's about the ministry; that's what matters."

To keep the music about the ministry, Kaczor performs armed with only a guitar, a stool and maybe a piano, interrupting songs with stories about her life, journey and calling.

Now, like Creation Festival changed her life, Kaczor's music is changing the lives of others.

"Laura is coming to North Alabama because one of our girls who has had a difficult childhood was listening to her music and found comfort and relief," said Milan Dekich, senior pastor at Fairview Church of God in Falkville, which hosted a conference and concert on Saturday. "The girl and Laura started corresponding and here we are now."

To reach more people, Kaczor founded and organized Lift-Up U University, a conference for tween and teenage girls about self-esteem, purity and beauty. She based the class, which kicked off in September 2010, on what she experienced as a teenager in school and now as an artist in an image-conscious industry.

"My heart breaks for the way young girls are bombarded with images of who and what they should be, and I long to share that they have a whole other true identity in Christ," Kaczor said.

Creating the classes was not an option for the woman who once again felt led by God.

"Wherever I went, young girls followed me around. I've learned don't fight what God makes painfully obvious," Kaczor said. "A lot of these girls need a positive role model. I have a really good opportunity to reach them. They will hear about my own struggles and things I've learned over the years."

She dreams of eventually turning the two-hour program into a weekend retreat.

On Saturday, Fairview Church of God in Falkville hosted a Lift Up U University.

"These young girls need encouragement and strength and to be told they are beautiful and wonderful just like they are. That's Laura's message for young girls," said Dekich.

While in North Alabama, Kaczor performed at Fairview Church of God on Saturday night and for Falkville High School and First Priority students at Brookhaven Middle on Friday.

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