

Buzz

SPOTLIGHT

Fresh Winds

Micah Stampley says worships can bring miracles.

Micah Stampley has performed on projects recorded by T.D. Jakes, released two solo projects and founded his own record label. But the 36-year-old says what excites him more is hearing testimonies from people who say they were healed while listening to songs on his latest release, Fresh Wind, such as “I Believe,” which his wife wrote while reading a book about healing evangelist Smith Wigglesworth. “It’s always been my passion to see musicians and singers get back to a realm in the Spirit of God where we’ll see miracles, signs and wonders [happen] just by hearing the songs of the Lord,” he says. “We’ve seen the manifested power of God oozing out of that song.”

Adrienne S. Gaines

Prayer Point

Reports of divorce among ministry leaders is a reminder of the challenges married couples face—both those inside and outside the media spotlight. This month we encourage you to pray that:

- »God would bring peace and healing in troubled relationships and homes

- »Couples facing marital challenges would find wise counselors
- »High-profile breakups won’t cause Christians to become disillusioned about marriage.

Number – Cruching

In its annual study measuring attitudes toward freedom of religion, speech and the press, the First Amendment Center (FAC) found that most Americans (55 percent) believe the Constitution established the U.S. as a Christian nation. The August survey of 1,003 people also found that 58 percent of respondents believe public schoolteachers should be allowed to lead prayers and 56 percent believe freedom of religion applies to all groups regardless of how extreme their views are, down from 72 percent in 2000. FAC scholars expressed alarm at the findings. Gene Policinski, executive director of the center, told USA Today: “People are applying their own values ... rather than educated knowledge of the Constitution,” which he says “clearly establishes the U.S. as a secular nation.”

HEALTH

Temple Keeping

After dropping seven dress sizes and 85 pounds, former registered nurse Kimberly Floyd is now teaching others how to lose weight and develop a healthy lifestyle. “The struggle wasn’t in losing the weight,” says Floyd, who founded Fairburn, Take Back Your Temple () in 2005. “It was in keeping it off and maintaining a healthy lifestyle.”

Floyd teaches that healthy living is a matter of good stewardship. Through her faith-based workshops and book, MoneyWise Weight Loss: the Faith-Based Plan for Building a Better Body on a Budget, she offers tips for purchasing wholesome foods on a budget and encourages people to

prioritize their health. “Losing weight is ultimately not about size, it’s about stewardship, she says. “It’s about making the most of all the resources God has given us, which includes our physical bodies. Achieving our optimal weight is one way that we can regain our energy, joy, and live the abundant life that we are called to live.”

Theresa Harvard Johnson

MARKETPLACE MINISTRY

Church Opens Mall for Ministry

The for-profit venture will help fund outreach activities

A charismatic megachurch in Jacksonville, Fla., has reopened an abandoned mall in hopes of generating jobs and hope in its community.

Bishop Vaughn McLaughlin and his Potter’s House Christian Fellowship spent \$4 million four years ago to buy what was then known as the Normandy Mall. After millions more went to renovations and on-site construction—including a 4,000-seat sanctuary, a 1,000-seat children’s church, two indoor playgrounds, a teen restaurant, a recording studio and more—the church unveiled its Kingdom Plaza shopping mall.

“Our purpose was basically just to transform the community that we live in,” McLaughlin said. “It wasn’t retail just for business’ sake, but now with the mall and through our school, we’re employing more than 200 people. ... It’s always been our vision to transform a community—educationally, economically, socially. That’s been our plan from day one.”

The for-profit venture formally opened in October and houses a

30-lane bowling alley, fitness center, restaurant and more than 20 retail stores. Located within steps of its sanctuary, the mall lacks some shops, such as lingerie stores, but houses numerous Christian-themed businesses such as Kingdom Kuts and the Rite 2 Life nutrition shop. McLaughlin hopes to allocate surplus income toward church outreach ministries. “We’re not finished yet,” he said. “We’ve got to continue to build and possess the land.”

Adrienne S. Gaines