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McVicker returns on new tour

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Every time I visit with singer-songwriter Mitch McVicker, a 36-year-old Topeka native, he seems to have dipped a little deeper into that well filled with living water.

I talked with him on the phone earlier this week and asked what keeps him engaged in a relationship with God in the midst of a busy life as a father, husband and musician.

"Well," he said, pausing to gather his thoughts, "I think one of the keys to me is remembering that my gumption won't get me anywhere."

That's one thing I like about McVicker: his use of well-chosen but infrequently used words like "gumption." Anyway, back to his quote.

"It really comes down to responding to the Lord," he said, "having the faith to look, and the grace to see."

Prayer plays an important role in his spiritual life, he said, but not in the way you might think.

"Prayer, for me, is becoming less about words and thoughts," he said, "and more about standing in the presence of the Lord."

McVicker comes back to his hometown for a solo concert at 7 p.m. Monday at Topeka Free Methodist Church, 3450 S.E. Indiana. There is no admission charge and a freewill offering will be received.

McVicker, who won a Dove Award in the late 1990s for "My Deliverer," a song he co-wrote with the late Rich Mullins, recently came out with his newest album, "Always Believe," released by Out of the Box Records.

The album features 14 songs and nearly 70 minutes of music.

McVicker said he normally doesn't like albums to have as many as 14 songs or more than an hour of music. However, in this case, that was as far down as he could edit his project, which features songs including "Lay Me Down," "You Move My Heart" and "Guided by Love."

"I typically don't like CDs to be that long," he said. "But I figured this is the way it is, and that's the way it'll go out."

McVicker explained the album's title.

"It's called 'Always Believe,' kind of as a reminder to myself," he said, "that my faith and my belief are not predicated upon the situations and circumstances I encounter in this life."

McVicker, who was severely injured in the same crash that claimed Mullins' life on an Illinois interstate highway in September 2007, is touring by himself, as opposed to being accompanied by a band.

"It's a lot more work," he said, "but there's a good sense of freedom in it. I think I've figured out a way to keep an audience engaged."

McVicker said he will accompany his vocals Monday night with a variety of guitars. He said he'll also play the harmonica, a ukulele and "a couple of surprises I don't want to give away."

As always, audiences will get to hear what's on McVicker's heart when he speaks between songs, which is worth attending the concert in itself.

Phil Anderson can be reached at (785) 295-1195 or phil.anderson@cjonline.com.

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