

Document Type: Field Note  
Field Worker: Duvall Osteen (Recordist)  
Co-worker: Holley Acey (Interviewer)  
Location:  
Begin Date: May 18, 2009  
End Date: May 18, 2009  
Event: Interview with Kim Briggs  
Elapsed Time: 43 minutes

My co-worker Holley Acey and I arrived at the home of Kevin Brigg's mother Joyce Briggs at about 3:15 pm. We were welcomed into the home by Kevin's wife, Kim Briggs, who we would interview later that afternoon. Kim and Joyce were excited to have us there, and asked us to explain the project. We asked about their relationship to Latisha Briggs, who was a subject in the field school interviews from 2008. Joyce laughed, and said that Latisha was her daughter. That connection seemed to make Kim more comfortable with the idea of being interviewed. Kim is not a shy person, but she does not like to boast about her contribution, so she minimizes a lot of her abilities, however, it was clear from the start that she had a lot to say. We sat at the table. Kevin arrived in from work at 3:30, and after briefly explaining the project to him, he was ready to begin the interview. Kim sat to his left, and listened as he answered our questions.

Kevin is the co-pastor of The Apostolic Sanctuary of Praise in Oxford, Mississippi. During his interview, he talked about growing up in Memphis and commuting to church in Oxford, where his father was pastor. He began to discuss the impact that music had on his life as a child, and how that shaped his love of music in church. He plays many instruments, including the guitar, drums, and keyboard. His passion lies in singing, which he does all of the time. When he says that, his wife Kim giggles and insinuates that he means all of the time, appropriate or not.

Kevin and Kim have a very loving relationship. During Kevin's interview, Kim mock-rolls her eyes at him, as if keeping him honest. They laugh and exchange glances throughout, and it seems, although Kim does not speak much during Kevin's interview, that they are accustomed to finishing each other's sentences. Throughout the interview, there was a bit of background noise. The battery in the fire alarm was low, and so there is a continual beeping every minute. It does not last long, and it does not detract from the interview, but it is audible.

Kevin spends a lot of time talking about the importance of singing gospel music as a part of worship. To him, the music is intertwined with the message, and the two are inseparable. He explains how many young people come to church just to hear the music, and how gospel music has changed over the years to suit the masses. He is very opposed to this, believing that the music and the message are not separate things, and that the church should not change just to suit others. Others should come to the church to experience the living God, not just to hear songs.

Kevin explains about the different choirs and praise teams at The Apostolic Sanctuary of Praise. The choirs each serve different functions: The women's choir, the adult choir, and the youth choir all perform at different times. The praise team, however, is a separate entity. They are responsible for keeping people focused on Jesus, and

keeping the energy high throughout the service. The praise team works with the congregation to keep people in tune with the message.

When Holley asks Kevin whether he prefers singing in a group, or singing solos, Kim bursts into laughter. It is clear that Kevin prefers to perform alone, even though he honestly loves the music that comes from the whole congregation. He is proud of his musical capabilities, which he directs to God, and he is passionate about music. He talks about his favorite songs, and his very favorite is called "Because He Lives." Kevin likes this song because he says it gives people something that they can relate to.

Both Kevin and Kim are interested in keeping the gospel music tradition alive. They aim to live entirely by example, and they work very hard to spread the message of their church through witnessing through their actions and through music. I was struck by their earnest dedication to living a life completely devoted to God.

Kevin talks about the type of music played in church. He says they incorporate every instrument available, from the drums, guitar and keyboard, to wind instruments and harps. He says that people should not just focus on the traditional instruments, but praise God through whatever instrument they are drawn to. Because Kevin is traditional in his belief that gospel music should not change to accommodate the changes in the secular world, I ask him about how he feels about instruments such as drums in traditional church services. He refers to the Bible, which states that we should praise God with a stomping of feet and a clapping of hands, and says that God intends for instruments to be used to praise him, and that the intentions lie in the player of the instrument.

In closing, Kevin stated that his vision for the church is to keep it simple, and true, and always focused on God.

Because Kim was interviewed immediately after Kevin, my field notes from Kim's interview will hold similarities to those found here.