

Gospel music trio The Pathfinders have literally been finding that path that God has laid before them for well over a decade. In 1993, Dearl Lemons formed The Pathfinders with three other men from his church choir in order to sing at their church for special occasions. Dearl had a love for Gospel music due to his family's involvement with bluegrass music, and he cultivated that love in the formation of the Pathfinders. The four men had an instant connection, but needed the assistance of Dawn McGuire, the church's pianist to help with parts. Much like Dearl, Dawn's appreciation for Gospel music started at a young age.

"Our first performance was singing during the break at a Pine Ridge Boys concert," mentioned Dearl. "The members of that group encouraged us and told us to keep going and to watch for what God might have in store for our group."

After one of the men resigned from the group, Dawn stepped in and started singing with The Pathfinders. Soon after that, The Pathfinders branched out from their local church and started singing at Auction Houses and Truckers for Christ rallies. After working with Southern Gospel veteran Danny Funderburk, The Pathfinders found a new ease in singing and soon was traveling all throughout the Southeast. The group went on to record nine recordings and release many songs to radio. The group's first charting single – "The Glory Goes to You" – would become their anthem.

"We've had other songs chart. However, this song was and is our 'testimony' song," mentioned Dearl.

Though Dawn and Dearl have remained a consistent part of the group, The Pathfinders have seen a few capable singers come through for a season. The group recently hired Brian Dockins in 2006 to fill in the needed lead position. Brian spent 18 years singing Gospel music before joining The Pathfinders. In addition to his singing talents, Brian is an ordained minister.

"I have known The Pathfinders for about eight years now," mentioned Brian. "I am so proud to now be a part of this ministry."

"We feel that vocally we are at our strongest with this current line-up," mentioned Dawn. "We're excited about everything that is going on in our ministry. So many doors have been opened, and we see great things in our future. I think I can speak for Dearl and Brian in that all three of us have been called by God into this ministry. It's not a hobby for us. We sacrifice time with our families and put everything we have into The Pathfinders. We know that if we can be a blessing to just one person, then we're doing what God wants us to do."

"We are motivated by seeing people walk the aisles," mentioned Brian. "It's awesome to see somebody give their hearts to Jesus. It's also so humbling to know that from something we've sung or said, somebody who is hurting or who has drifted away from God has received a blessing. We always pray before a concert that God would let us be a blessing and hopefully, he will let us receive one in turn."

"I remember one Sunday when I felt like I couldn't go on and that maybe it was time for me to stop singing, somebody put a note in the offering plate," recalled Dawn. "It said, 'I don't have any money, but I can pray for you everyday that no matter where you're at somebody else will be touched as I was today'. It's not about Dawn, Dearl or Brian. It's all about being used by God and being willing vessels for Him to work through. Sometimes we just step back, and it's like we're on the outside looking in and we're amazed at how God uses us in spite of ourselves."

Dearl says, "When we look back over the past 16 years and think of all the souls that have been won to the Lord through our ministry and then look to see where we are now and how much we've grown emotionally, spiritually and vocally throughout the years, it really excites us. We're proud of our relationships with our peers and with the churches that we minister to. We've made a lot of friends in gospel music and take every opportunity that we can to help other groups with their ministry as well."

The Pathfinders have a wonderful past, but the group looks forward to an even better future.

Dawn concluded, "We definitely see ourselves continuing the work we are doing right now. We don't ever want to get to the point that we can't go and sing in the local churches. However, we're going to go through every door that God opens for us. We don't ever want to lose sight of why God has called us into this ministry."