

Ann Downing Ministries

This is Ann...

More than likely you've seen Ann Downing as a regular on the popular Gaither Homecoming Video series. However the majority of her time is spent maintaining a full schedule of church concerts and speaking engagements each weekend throughout the United States, Canada, and parts of Europe.

Apart from her affiliation with the Gaither Homecoming Friends, Ann's own versatile music style appeals to a wide range of musical tastes and age groups, not just the Gaither Video fans.

Ann's unique presentation style is also appealing in that she comes down from the platform to communicate with the audience on a very personal level. Her spontaneous, off-the-cuff delivery gives the feeling of a conversational visit rather than a rigid formal program.

Raised on a cotton farm in rural Mississippi, Ann grew up dreaming of the day she'd sing Gospel music all over the world. Right out of high school she began to realize that dream by securing a position with the legendary Speer Family, later marrying the man of her dreams and co-founding a group that helped shape the face of Gospel music we have today. She won the industry's highest honor—the Dove Award—for Female Vocalist within a year of co-founding the Downings and went on to be inducted into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame.

Her Gospel music career spanning almost fifty years, Ann has been lauded with various awards and accolades; however, she's quick to tell you that she's like you in many ways. Fading success? She's been there! Crumbling marriage or financial ruin? She's been there, too! Lost a spouse or experienced a devastating trauma in your family? Ann can relate!

What do you do when you can't "fix" what's wrong in your life or the lives of those you love? What do you do when the circumstances of your life beg the question, "Do you really believe what you've said about trusting God?" Ann's intensely personal story is one that reaches us all where we live and helps us hold firmly to the promise that "earth has no sorrow that heaven can't heal."

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Just the Facts

Awards and Accolades

1998 Gospel Music Hall of Fame Inductee
1997 Grand Ole Gospel Reunion Living Legend Award
1973 Singing News Queen of Gospel Music Award
1970 Dove Award: Female Vocalist of the Year

Radio Highlights

Solo:

May 1999 #8 "Climbing Jacob's Ladder" (# 25 Song of the Year)
December 1995 #16 "Gettin' Ready Today"
January 2006 "He Already Knew Me" debuts at #46

The Downings:

September 1977 #17 "I've Got A Song In My Heart Again"
June 1977 #20 "It's My Desire"
November 1976 #6 "Operator"
September 1975 #15 "I Feel So Good About It"
March 1975 #12 "Oh I Want To See Him"
March 1974 #3 "Greater Is He That Is In Me"
March 1974 #16 "Caught Up Together"
March 1973 #2 "I'll Soon Be Gone"
October 1972 #6 "I've Got Confidence"
July 1971 #16 "Gettin' Ready Today"
May 1971 #15 "Happiness"
April 1971 #5 "City of Gold"
October 1970 #1 "Sheltered In The Arms Of God"
September 1970 #10 "He Touched Me"
May 1970 #3 "Going Home"
January 1970 #1 "Jesus Is Coming Soon"
January 1970 #3 "I'm Free"
January 1970 #19 "I Believe What The Bible Says"

Songwriting:

December 2011-? #10 "Bring On the Joy"; Downing/Williams;Tribute Quartet

Author

2009 Skidmarks on the Road of Life

Television Highlights

Reality Check with Ann Downing
Gaither Gospel Hour
The Downings
Christian Television Network, various programming
700 Club
Praise The Lord, TBN
The New Jim Bakker Show
Gospel Singing Jubilee
Crook and Chase, TNN

Tour Highlights

Hosts her annual "Middle Tennessee Women's Retreat"
Speaks at women's conferences all across the U.S. & Canada
Performances in Israel
Performances in Ireland, Scotland, England, and Canada
Concert at Crystal Cathedral
Billy Graham Crusade in Nashville, TN 2000



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Look Who's Talking...

"I've been listening to the fantastic voice of Ann Downing for many years. She remains a passionate performer with a crystal clear voice. Any church would enjoy her rich ministry and positive outlook on life."

Dr. Stan Toler, General Superintendant of the Church of the Nazarene

"As a minister of Worship, I hear so much music and receive new CDs all the time. I listened to Ann's new CD...her music, her message, and just 'Ann Downing' pulled me right in, made me listen, be involved, and caused me to worship God and praise Him while being blessed by the whole experience. Ann Downing is REAL! I love her new project...it is my new favorite!"

Jim Van Matre, Minister of Music & Worship, First Baptist Church, Gulf Shores, AL

"Ann Downing knows where the heart is! She sings with passion, grace, and quality, but her aim is to deliver God's Word where it's needed the most...right in our hearts! Her stature in gospel music is unquestioned and her professional ability with few peers. Ann ministers, and that's what is most important to any local church."

Harlan Moore, Minister of Music & Worship

Bethany First Nazarene Church, Bethany, OK

"We have known Ann for 45 years and if you have been enjoying the Homecoming video series, you know of our involvement together. We feel she will be an encouragement to your church or any place of ministry in her music and speaking. She is a communicator!"

Bill and Gloria Gaither

"Ann Downing is a special blessing to the body of Christ. The Lord has anointed her and given her such a powerful ministry. Whether singing or speaking, she demonstrates class and elegance. When I think of Ann Downing, I think quality, genuineness, and real talent."

Mike Speck, Christian Music Artist and Choral Arranger

"Ann Downing is a wonderful person and marvelous singer. She will bless any audience with her love of our Lord and Savior and with her way of communicating His help in overcoming life experiences that would cause most to fold."

Pat Mathis, WA TC T.V., Atlanta, GA

"No one is a better communicator through gospel song than Ann Downing. She will draw you into the flow of the service with her vibrant spirit and her encouraging music. The Lord has His hand on her and she is always used of Him in every setting. You never go away from a worship experience with Ann without a keen sense that you have been lifted into heavenly places."

Johnny Foster, Co-minister of Music, Eastwood Baptist Church, Marietta, GA

"For 17 years of my pastoral ministry, Paul and Ann Downing were a part of my congregation. I observed how God used them to bless multitudes of people in their music ministry. After Paul's homegoing, I am grateful Ann has continued that ministry and I highly recommend her to any group as someone who will share from her heart the things God has taught her through good times and bad times."

Dr. Millard Reed, Retired President, Trevecca Nazarene University

"Ann Downing, with her kind spirit and loving heart, embraces the congregation and makes all feel they are participating. Her selection of music and beautiful voice are used to magnify Jesus and encourage people. Your church/fellowship will be greatly blessed by the ministry of Ann Downing. Call her today!"

Johnny Walker, Pastor, Pine Forest Baptist Church, Stewart, MS

Ann Downing Ministries

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DOVE AWARD-WINNING VETERAN SOLOIST RELEASES NEW BOOK

SKIDMARKS ON THE ROAD OF LIFE

Dove Award winner Ann Downing is now a published author! While the newest project from Ann Downing Ministries may not go in your CD player, *Skidmarks on the Road of Life* tells just as much about the faithfulness and love of God as the music Ann has sung all her life. Filled with personal accounts of tragedy and triumph, Ann shares how God has used her circumstances to effect change in her own life and the lives of others.

“This isn’t a day-by-day journal of my life. Looking back, I discovered that I could see how God had worked through every situation to lead me to my next destination. All the while He used even my mistakes and bad decisions to help get me where I was supposed to be. My prayer for *Skidmarks on the Road of Life* is that it will be a tool that encourages others to look back down memory lane and see that God has done the same work in their own lives,” Downing said of her new book.

God is already answering Ann’s prayer. Many have written to say they’ll be passing the book on to friends and family or buying extra copies to give as gifts. Here is what one reader in particular had to say about *Skidmarks on the Road of Life*:

“It not only tells of the life struggles that Ann Downing has endured, but also has a tremendous Christian value for finding our way through the tunnels and curves of life. With scripture from the Holy Bible to back it up, there is no question that God has inspired this writing through Ann. It is a quick, easy read and well worth your small investment and time.”

Skidmarks on the Road of Life is now available for purchase from Ann’s on-line store at www.anndowning.com, www.amazon.com, or www.christianbook.com.

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www.anndowning.com

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Words for Women

Speaking Topics from the Heart and Life of Ann Downing

Ann uses her gift of music to enhance each speaking session

45 min. sessions are ideal for a one-time speaking event such as a brunch or banquet.

Several topics are combined for weekend long events.

I Quit (45 minutes - 1 hour)

You reach the end of the rope, so you tie a knot and hang on! But what do you do when you've tied a rope full of knots and still find that nothing changes? Through her intensely personal story, Ann Helps you identify two surprising words that may change your life.

Father Knows Best (45 minutes - 1 hour, can be combined with "I Quit" for a one day event)

It is a story that seems destined for the big screen, but even Hollywood can't top God's work in the lives of his children! From dramatic start to heartwarming finish, you'll learn about the Father's loving care as Ann shares how God turned the 56 most painful days of her life into a new beginning for one special teenager.

I'm A Survivor! (45 minutes)

Sometimes life votes you off the island and you feel like you are the weakest link! When you are out of life-lines and there is no friend to phone, how will you make it in the real world? Ann turns to the Bible to find the first real survivor – **and wouldn't you know she was a woman?** Travel with Ann as she ventures down the path of Ruth and learn to find the divine harvest of purpose in your own life.

Enough of the Fluff... Give Me the Real Stuff! (45 minutes)

Comfortable Christianity, move over! Wave goodbye to laid-back religion; this is where the rubber meets the road! When life forces you out of the hymnbook and off the pew, how will you respond? Walk with Ann on a journey that takes you face to face with your faith and challenges you to put it into practice.

Above All Else (45 minutes)

You check the mirror once more to make sure you're in the best condition possible, but have you checked your "heart condition" today? Through a series of "heart scriptures", Ann helps us learn what our Heavenly Father puts 'Above All Else' and what "heart-titudes" He desires us to possess.

No Strings Attached (45 minutes)

Love and acceptance... we all want it, but it seems difficult to find without the expectation of something in return. How can we possibly show our very personal selves to others or even to God? Sharing the story of making a gift for her craft-talented mother, Ann communicates that, beyond a doubt, we're loved... strings and all... with no strings attached.



With
Ann Downing



RECALCULATING!

Stop...

Look...

Listen...

A Two Hour refresher for Women

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

Phillipians 4:8

Does your mental GPS get out of sync with reality and repeatedly lead you to detours, dead ends, or the wrong way altogether? I have good news!!!

God was the original GPS, and He's still in the RECALCULATING business! After all, He led the Israelites as a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. He's begging to do the same for YOU.

During a “road trip” with your women’s group, complete with a brief snack time “pit stop”, Ann wants to share her experiences in having to recalculate life. She will help you understand, through her powerful and personal presentation, that most of our hardships and confusion are caused by losing sight of the right, pure, and true. She’ll remind us that U-turns are legal at times and may even be necessary. In fact, a U-turn might cause us to STOP... LOOK... and LISTEN... to remember and review the “landmarks” of our lives as we head back to the last place we know God gave the “Green Light”.

For more information contact:

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Ann Downing Ministries



Paul and Ann Downing knew first-hand what the healing power of God could do in a relationship. Their life together was evidence. Having lost everything of earthly value, except each other, Paul and Ann set their sights to what they believed was a calling of God.

That calling was to establish a retreat for women. Their goal was to provide a safe haven, a place where women from all walks of life could come one weekend each year for the purpose of reconnecting with themselves by taking time away from their “everydayness” and looking to Jesus for their true identities. They knew this process would lead to their ultimate goal, helping women learn more about the faith, hope, and love of the God who had restored them as individuals and as a couple. As Paul and Ann dreamed together, Middle Tennessee Women’s Retreat began to take form. The calling that had become a vision was now a reality.

December 1991 marked the first of many attempts to defeat the ministry of Middle Tennessee Women’s Retreat. In the parking lot of their Winchester, KY motel, Paul Downing collapsed and died at the age of 59. Emergency rescue teams revived Paul. He lived a total of 56 days in the Critical Care Unit of Lexington, KY’s Humana Hospital. Ann lived in the hospital waiting room, never returning to Tennessee until after Paul’s fight ended and the flight to His Heavenly Father arrived.

As days turned to weeks, Ann’s friends rallied around her, concerned for Paul but still making plans for the first retreat. The day of decision finally arrived. Brochures were printed and ready to be mailed. The call was made. Did Ann want to go ahead with the retreat she and Paul had spent many of the past months planning? With Paul in the Critical Care Unit, his status changing almost daily, the courage for which Ann has come to be known was evidenced in what could arguably be the greatest act of faith in her life. Her answer to the question was simply, “Yes, mail the brochures.”

Paul passed away only 2 months before the first Middle Tennessee Women’s Retreat. Though his fingerprints were all over the planning and the journey to realizing the vision, he never got to meet the women whose lives his desire and hard work would change. Amazingly, as only God can do, it turned out that Ann was the one most ministered to during that first retreat. She felt free to grieve even among people she did not know. As a result, the element of safety Paul desperately wanted the atmosphere to exude became the reputation for which Middle Tennessee Women’s Retreat is known today.

Ann did not expect there to be a second retreat. April 12-14, 2013 we will celebrate the 22nd annual retreat marked with a Friday evening Musical Welcome. The retreat is, after all, held in Music City. Ladies from over 20 states break into small groups, and many workshops are offered on a variety of subjects especially important to Christian women. Past workshops include topics such as Financial Freedom, Preparing a Feast in the Presence of Your Enemies, and Spiritual Warfare to name a few. Ann carefully selects workshop leaders with a passion for communicating the truth of who God says we are and what He wants to share with us through His Word and each other’s life experiences.

Dynamic keynote speakers are also characteristic of Middle Tennessee Women’s Retreat. Florence Littauer, Carol Kent, Jennie Afman Dimkoff, Gloria Gaither, Chonda Pierce, Mary Whelchel, and Sandra Aldrich are just a few of the speakers Middle Tennessee Women’s Retreat has proudly hosted. Well known and much sought after speaker and humorist, Judy Hampton, will be the keynote speaker for 2013’s retreat.

For more information on Middle Tennessee Women’s Retreat, contact:

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Formed in 2006, the “Ms. Lillie Project” is a tribute to Ann’s mother, Lillie Ida Sanders. Ms. Lillie instilled her love for music in her young daughter by teaching Ann the alto parts to complement her own soaring soprano. They became known for their dynamic mother-daughter duets. Ann credits Ms. Lillie for her singing success noting that, “I wouldn’t know how to sing if not for my mama.”

For the last year of her life, her back riddled with osteoporosis, Ann and her sister, Lavern, had no choice but to place their mother under the specialized care of the staff at Calhoun Nursing Facility. While there, Ms. Lillie relished every opportunity to point out her “baby” when a Gaither Homecoming video was shown in the common area of the nursing home. Suddenly, the nursing home staff began to notice something incredible. Residents who had not spoken or given any indication (in some cases for years) that they were even aware of their surroundings began to mouth the words and sing along with the music that had undoubtedly been a major part of their lives in years past.

Ms. Lillie experienced her own homecoming on Mother’s Day morning, 2005. After her mama’s passing, Ann committed herself to giving back to the community of people who’d spent years pouring into the lives of others, only to be mostly forgotten and the end of theirs. The “Ms. Lillie Project” was born.

Ann Downing Ministries accepts monetary donations which go toward providing Gaither Homecoming Videos and DVD players for nursing home facilities across the country. Facilities are submitted by concert goers and fANNtastics (recipients of Ann’s e-mail newsletter). Videos and players (where needed) may be placed in honor or in memory of loved ones who are or were cared for in the facility.

For more information about how to help with the Ms. Lillie Project, please contact Karissa@anndowning.com or call 877-886-1629.

Ann Downing Ministries Singing with the Senior Saints



“It takes all kinds to make the world go-round.” This commonly used adage especially proves true in churches today. Perhaps you have been approached with statements that went something like this, “We never sing the old stuff anymore. We never even open the hymnal. I can’t make out the words they say when they’re singing. These songs we’re doing just repeat the same thing over and over. Why should we mess up a beautiful sanctuary with a screen?”

“It takes all kinds to make the world go-round.” This holds true for personal preference in music styles, too. Did you know that, when first written as a hymn, “How Great Thou Art” was banned from some churches because the melody wasn’t thought “sacred” enough? This is likely true of many of today’s most beloved church anthems. Ann Downing Ministries understands that music style is a matter of personal preference, not a matter of right and wrong. Music can be the voice of the soul. Who are we to tell another person that their soul isn’t singing in tune?

This also means that churches are left with quite the dilemma, attempting to cater to the musical appetites of generations as vast as the east is far from the west. Some are left participating in only a portion of the Sunday praise set because it’s the part they “like”. One thing about life has never changed... CHANGE itself. People don’t like change, and Ann Downing Ministries would like to help ease the tensions these innately human responses often cause.

Ann is available for ministry events catering specifically to the “prime time” age group in your church. These include many of the “older” Gaither Homecoming type songs, some that lean toward the heyday of the Gospel Quartet, and some that are recently written but sound like the “oldies but goodies”. These events tend to work well for Saturday luncheons and dinners as well as for special “Seniors Only” Sunday nights.

Contact Karissa Petty at the Ann Downing Ministries office to talk about how Ann can help you address this very pertinent and special need at your church. Don’t be ashamed; it’s simply reality!

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