

# Cory Asbury – Reckless Love: Review



*Music review by Luchae*

*Williams*

American Christian singer and songwriter, Cory Asbury, released his second solo studio album in January 2018. Titled **Reckless Love**, the album is the worship leader's first full-length release with new label, Bethel Music.

The critically-acclaimed title song was released by Bethel Music in October 2017, quickly growing in popularity. The track was already a top-selling Christian song on iTunes, prior to the album's release date, and has been featured on set lists and in churches around the world, including Darlene Zschech's HopeUC church.

The song also struck a chord with famous Christian crooner, Michael W Smith, who has recorded it for his forthcoming live worship album. *Reckless Love* debuted at No 1 on Billboard's Christian Albums chart in the United States, marking the

singer's first appearance on the highly sought-after chart.

The track, ***Reckless Love***, is everything you would expect to find in a popular worship song: poetic, emotive lyric that transports the listener to a place of reverence and worship, and a catchy melody line and hook that will stick with you.

Reminiscent of Chris Tomlin's *Good Good Father*, the song paints a picture of a father yearning after his children. Some may not agree with the use of the word "reckless" in the song, but Asbury explains: "When I use the phrase, 'the reckless love of God', I'm not saying that God Himself is reckless. I am, however, saying that the way He loves, is in many regards, quite so. What I mean is this: He is utterly unconcerned with the consequences of His actions with regards to His own safety, comfort, and well-being. His love isn't crafty or slick. It's not cunning or shrewd. In fact, all things considered, it's quite childlike, and might I even suggest, sometimes downright ridiculous.

"His love bankrupted heaven for you. His love doesn't consider Himself first. His love isn't selfish or self-serving. He doesn't wonder what He'll gain or lose by putting Himself out there. He simply gives Himself away on the off-chance that one of us might look back at Him and offer ourselves in return."

### **From boyhood to manhood**

Asbury describes the album as one that documents his journey from boyhood to manhood to child of God. Sharing on the Bethel Music Instagram page, he says: "On the journey from boyhood to manhood there were a million cracks in the road. But somehow the grace of God swooped in with wings otherworldly and carried me safely over each one. And finally, those mighty wings set me down in a broad place. Now I'm a father to my own little boy. And somehow, in so becoming, I'm a little child again. Fully free and fully alive in my Father's eyes. The brokenness didn't break me.

“No, we rewrote the story in crimson ink. And I dance again like a little boy. Nothing between us. Innocent and free just like You always wanted. And I realize I’ve always been the dream of Your heart. A son.”

The opening song is preceded by the soulful ***Water and Dust***, complete with an acoustic flavour and almost ethereal effects. This song showcases the singer’s smooth vocal perfectly, as he sings “Gently Your voice like a calming embrace calls me from out of the noise/You whisper to me, ‘Child, forget not your dreams’ as we lie awake in the dark/just don’t lose heart.”

Most of the songs on the album carry the same sentiment. They are both gentle and powerful, creating a moment of intimacy for the listener to reflect on the beauty and majesty of God. You’ll find this on songs such as ***You Won’t Let Go*** and ***Endless Love***.

Passion song, ***Death Where Is Your Sting***, has a powerful Easter theme, speaking about the work of Christ on the cross. My favorite part is the bridge, where Asbury’s resounding vocal declares: “No weapon formed against us will prosper/The gates of hell won’t stand/Your Church will rise from glory to glory/in the name of Jesus!”

The more upbeat songs on the album include the acoustic driven ***Garments*** and the catchy ***Only Takes a Moment*** – a mid tempo praise song with a soulful edge.

Album closer, ***Endless Alleluia***, does such a great job at beautifully completing the journey. The song features Asbury’s soulfully sweet vocal and a breathtakingly beautiful soundtrack complete with strings and just the right amount of effects. The song’s chorus says: “Let our voices rise/All creation cries/Singing out an endless alleluia/From this moment on/Join with Heaven’s song/Singing out an endless alleluia!

Cory Asbury fans will be pleased with such a phenomenal

offering. Asbury literally wears his heart on his sleeve on this beautifully-penned album, with songs that point the listener back to God. If you're not familiar with Asbury, his worship or his musicianship, give this one a go, you will not regret it.

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## EP record launch for vocal star Nolene Spinks



Nolene Spinks.

17-year-old Port Elizabeth singer, Nolene Spinks, will launch her much-awaited EP record, *Glow* at Word of Faith Christian Centre on Sunday June 3 at 7pm. Entrance to the event is free.

*Glow* comprises five tracks, three of them having been written by Nolene.

The winner of Fresh Factor Live 2017, Nolene's vocal ability stood out among hundreds of contestants from Port Elizabeth. The competition was judged by Bevin Samuels, 2016 South African Idols finalist, Alison Gooch, the worship leader of

Burn PE and Manny Eagle, the Music and Creative Arts director of Word of Faith Christian Centre.

Among Nolene's prizes was a free recording of her EP record, which included a photo shoot and assistance with setting up her brand.

"During the making of this EP, I picked up the guitar I got when I was four years old and really used it for the first time." Spinks said.

From the age of six, Nolene knew that she wanted to be singer and had already recorded her first song. However, she would face rejection and bullying from her classmates, before changing schools, and finding the courage to take part in singing competitions both locally and abroad.

A new learner at her primary school, Nolene found that friendship groups and connections had already been made, and that she wasn't accepted. Her reading-stutter had become a source mockery, and she was being bullied by her new classmates. Soon, she lost all interest in school.

"By the end of my 4th Grade, I took part in an Eisteddfod and was singing 'Hero' by Mariah Carrey. But when I reached the high note, my voice disappeared. That was the beginning of a six month period of not being allowed to speak unless I was in speech therapy. My diagnoses: vocal nodes."

Now, three years later, Nolene has switched schools and has a group of friends who laugh, cry, eat and pray together.

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# 'Jesus Culture' back in South Africa



Local worshippers are in for a treat in June, when global youth movement, Jesus Culture, hits South African shores to host a series of worship nights across the country.

The popular worship collective, well known for hits such as *Your Love Never Fails* and *How He Loves*, will be gracing venues across Pretoria, Johannesburg and Cape Town to host worship and ministry nights featuring Kim Walker-Smith, Chris McClarney and Jesus Culture founder, Banning Liebscher.

Sadly, Durban and Port Elizabeth has been dropped from the band's tour Itinerary but two more dates have been added to the Pretoria and Cape Town stops, after tickets for those venues were sold out.

Speaking in a promotional video clip, Walker-Smith and Liebscher shared their enthusiasm for the ministry trip. "It's going to be an incredible time. We're excited!" said Liebscher.

Liebscher, a powerful speaker and teacher in his own right, will lead the teaching segments of the worship nights. He served on staff at Bethel Church in Redding, California for 18 years, founding the Jesus Culture ministry during that time. In 2014, along with his family and the Jesus Culture team, he relocated to Sacramento where they started a church, Jesus

Culture Sacramento. His vision is to see people encounter God, be empowered in community and engaged in revival and transformation.

A firm favorite, on the upcoming tour, is Jesus Culture worship leader, Kim Walker-Smith, who will be leading worship along with Jesus Culture Music newbie, Chris McClarney. Crooner, McClarney, made waves in 2015 with his first Jesus Culture Music release titled *Everything and Nothing Less* and has been hailed as a singer and songwriter to watch out for.

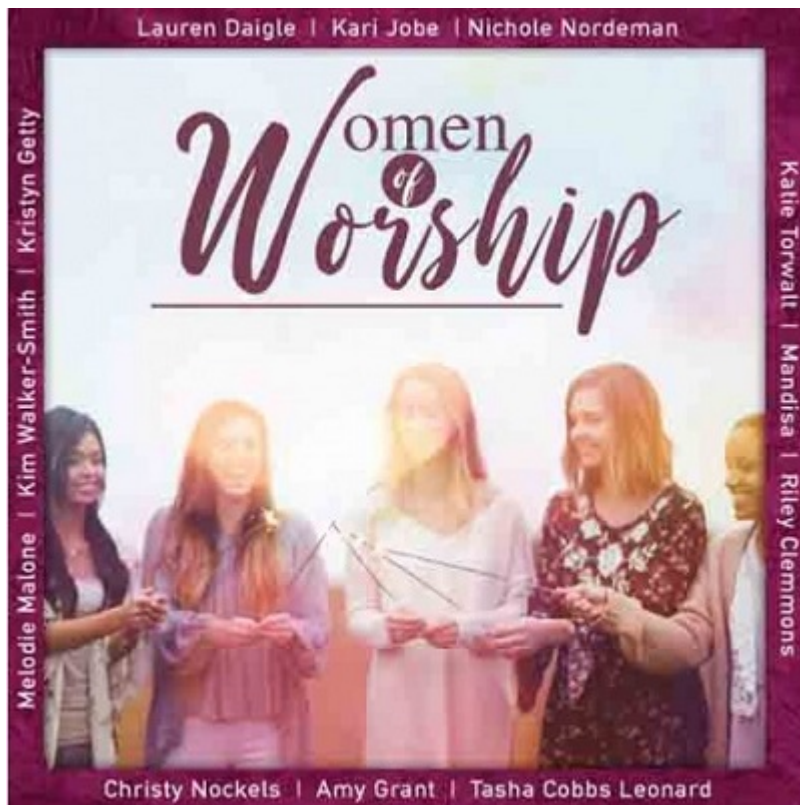
Tickets for the June 4 worship night at the Moreletapark Gemeente Auditorium in Pretoria and the June 8 worship night at the GrandWest Grand Arena in Cape Town, are still available.

Tickets for the June 5 Pretoria worship night, the June 7 Johannesburg event and the June 9 Cape Town event have been sold out.

Ticket prices range between R250 and R350 and can be purchased on [www.itickets.co.za](http://www.itickets.co.za)

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## **Women of Worship compilation: Review**



Music Review by Luchae

*Williams*

With Mother's Day quickly approaching, I love intentional gift giving. The 2018 **Women of Worship** compilation album, for example, would make for a great spoil! With songs that both inspire you and challenge you to leave your cares at the feet of Jesus, listeners are encouraged to experience the rest and peace that only the presence of God can bring.

The collection features 14 powerhouse tracks from some of today's most popular female worship leaders such as Natalie Grant, Tasha Cobbs Leonard and Kim Walker Smith. I appreciate that every singer featured is renowned for both her gifting and the presence of God that she carries.

Passion Conference stalwart Christy Nockels opens with her catchy anthem, **Marvelous Light** from her album *Life Light Up*.

The vibey praise song is preceded by worship music darling Kari Jobe's midtempo track from her *Majestic* album, titled **Keeper of My Heart**. Jobe is featured twice on this compilation and I quite enjoyed her worship track, **Speak To Me**, too. The



song changes the atmosphere and draws your attention to Holy Spirit, sharpening your ear as you intentionally build up your faith to hear from Him.

Other popular worship artists featured are Mandisa with her dance track, ***Overcomer*** and Dove award winner Lauren Daigle, with her catchy pop jam, ***Trust in You***.

If deep worship is more your thing, you'll be excited to learn that vocal power house Tasha Cobbs Leonard's ***Fill Me Up (Live)*** is also featured on the album. Leonard released this version on her 2015 album *One Place Live*, and it has since grown in popularity.

Amy Grant's ***Carry You*** is also featured, as well as two tracks from the soulful Nichole Nordeman. Nordeman's ***Slow Down*** is the perfect Mother's Day theme song. The track is an ode to her children, and paints the picture of a mother watching her babies grow up.

An exciting addition to the compilation is up-and-coming artist Riley Clemmon's debut hit single, ***Broken Prayers***. With a pop element, rich vocal and clever lyric, the song speaks about our God of redemption, who sees the beauty in our scars: "When I'm hurt, at my worst/You meet me there/Cause you see the beauty/In my broken prayers."

All in all, I would rate the *Women of Worship* compilation a thoughtful and poignant addition to any Mother's Day spoil. With chart-topping songs that feature powerful messages and beautiful reflections of worship, I give it a thumbs up!

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**Inspirational 'I Can Only  
Imagine' movie launching in  
SA**





Eastern Cape

No screenings in

South African theaters in many parts of the country will soon be able to see *I Can Only Imagine*, a critically-acclaimed film based on the true story behind the number-one-played radio single in Christian music.

The Erwin Brothers' film about the story behind Mercy Me lead singer Bart Millard's redemptive relationship with his troubled father – which was the inspiration behind the Christian rock band's hit song *I Can Only Imagine* – grossed a staggering R213-million at the US box office in its opening weekend, ranking third overall behind *Tomb Raider* and *Black Panther*.

The movie opens in South Africa on May 11 and there will be sneak previews at a number of Ster Kinekor cinemas around the country. But unfortunately for audiences in the Eastern Cape it appears that either Ster Kinekor or theatre management at individual cinemas decided not to preview or release the movie in Port Elizabeth, East London or anywhere else in the province.

Asked about the exclusion of the Eastern Cape, Celeste La Mantia of public relations company MS Publicity said as far as she knew individual movie houses selected movies they believed would do well with their target audiences. Later she also sent Gateway News the following somewhat puzzling response from distributors Ster Kinekor to the Eastern Cape question: "It is a Ster Kinekor decision. Ster Kinekor will only hosted the influencers screening on 12 April and then the screenings in conjunction with media partners on 9 May."

Perhaps it is time for Eastern Cape viewers – and viewers in any other excluded areas – who would like to see quality faith-based films to let their local cinemas know?

The idea for the *I Can Only Imagine* song was inspired by Millard's past and was written years after finally overcoming his abusive childhood. It immediately resonated with audiences of all ages, became an instant top-selling hit, won Songwriter Of The Year and Song Of The Year at the Dove Awards and was certified as a double platinum selling Christian song.

"We were making an independent record, and we needed one more song. And I was literally just trying to find a blank page [in my journal], and every page had the words 'I Can Only Imagine' written on it," shares Bart. "So it was kinda like, 'I get it.' I wrote the song on the bus one night. Even though it took about five or ten minutes to write, it had been in my heart for a really long time."

**Watch the Song [here](#)**

*I Can Only Imagine* (the movie) tells the story of a little boy in Texas who is emotionally and physically abused by his father (Dennis Quaid) and abandoned by his mother. The abuse starts after his father suffers a brain injury due to an accident at work and becomes a monster who is unable to control his anger and disappointment with life. By the grace of God, Bart (John Michael Finley) and his father manage to redeem their relationship during his teenage years and he gets to witness the power of faith and transformation first-hand.

**Watch the movie trailer here:**  
[http://www.imdb.com/title/tt6450186/videoplayer/vi3335632921?ref\\_=tt\\_ov\\_vi](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt6450186/videoplayer/vi3335632921?ref_=tt_ov_vi)

Broadway actor, John Michael Finley's (*Les Misérables*, *Sweeney Todd*), makes his on-screen debut in the lead-role of Bart Millard in this emotional film. It was his booming voice that first drew filmmakers to cast him as this pivotal character. Interestingly, his background proved to connect him even more to the role.

"I was born in Arkansas and grew up in southern Missouri, so I had that Midwest mentality," says Finley. "Bart and I both had early life events that made us grow up real fast. And I connect with the way Bart uses humour to deflect other people," Finley said.

Acclaimed actor, Dennis Quaid (*The Right Stuff*, *Breaking Away*, *The Parent Trap*, *Far From Heaven*) plays Arthur, Bart's father, who saw his dreams dashed and strives to protect his son from similar disappointment, even if it means having no dreams at all. The film also boasts impressive performances by model and television star, Madeline Carroll, in the role of Millard's wife Shannon as well as Golden Globe Winner, Cloris Leachman (*A Brand New Life*, *Malcolm in the Middle*), as Memaw.

Sneak previews to the public are taking place on Sunday April

29 at the following Ster-Kinekor cinemas (bookings available on [www.sterkinekor.com](http://www.sterkinekor.com)): Tygervalley, Cape Gate, Blueroute, Somerset Mall, Garden Route Mall, Gateway, Mall of Africa, Cradlestone, Matlosana Mall, Brooklyn Mall, Kolonnade, Irene Mall, Cresta, Mall at Carnival and Eastgate.

The film officially opens in South Africa on 11 May at the following cinemas:

Ster Kinekor:

Cape Region: Tygervalley, Cape Gate, Blueroute, Somerset Mall, Garden Route Mall

KZN Region: Gateway

Northern Region: Mall Of Africa, Cradlestone, Matlosana, Brooklyn Commercial, Kolonnade, Irene

Southern Region: Cresta, Mall Of Carnival, Eastgate

Nu Metro: Canal Walk, Cornubia, Hyde Park, Menlyn Park, Pavilion, Westgate, Woodlands

Independent Sites: Epic Mall@Reds, Epic Northridge, Maxi Cineplex, Midlands Cine, Movies@Emnotweni, Movies@Monte, NC Game City, Suncoast Cine

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## **Social Club Misfits – Into The Night: Review**



*Music Review by Luchae*

*Williams*

Hip hop fans will enjoy the latest offering by Christian hip hop duo, Social Club Misfits. The dynamic rap ensemble, made up of rappers Fern and Marty Mar, was formed in 2011, releasing six studio albums to date. Their latest addition, titled ***Into The Night***, features the likes of Chris Batson, Tauren Wells and songbird, Jordin Sparks.

Well-known for their tongue-in-cheek way of sharing the gospel, the duo make bold statements on the album. The first song, ***Nightmare***, for example, welcomes the listener with a bold opening line: "Devils worst nightmare, us." The song itself has an almost eerie melody line and a rhythmic tempo. The lyric speaks about the Misfits' mission statement: "the boys are back in town and we go into the night / Fighting for what is right, 'til the end always." Fern reiterates: "God in the centre is the reason why we're traveling / Grace got me feeling amazing, I feel extravagant."

Other big tracks on the album include title track ***Into The Night***, ***Happy Accident*** and ***Clear*** featuring Foggieraw. All three



carry an almost sombre feel, and the duo are not afraid to call other rappers out.

Crooner, Tauren Wells, joins the team on track *War Cry*. This track, possibly my favourite on the album, is a melodic, orchestral battle cry, that speaks about rising up with “a love that can conquer hatred”. I appreciate how the song points us to the Savior and His love poured out through us.

Another favourite has to be the infectious latin-infused *Tuyo*. The track features a catchy hook, groovy beat, amazing vocals by American Idols’ Jordin Sparks and Danny Gokey and lyrical content that speaks about finding security in God.

Evan Craft is featured in album closer, *Solo*. This RnB infused track is also heavily influenced by the duo’s Latino roots and majority of its lyrical content is in Spanish.

Not your typical praise and worship album, Social Club Misfit newbies will enjoy the duo’s fresh take on sharing the Gospel. For those who follow the Christian hip hop scene, this is one to add to your collection.

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**Burn 24-7 linking up with  
#imagine for 24-hour PE  
worship event**



Burn 24-7 is inviting lovers of Jesus across Port Elizabeth to come and unite to seek God for revival in the city and nation in a 24-hour worship event together with national youth movement #imagine.

The upcoming prayer and worship event will start on Friday May 4 2018 at 7pm at Doxa Deo Church (26 Benmore Avenue, Brymore, opposite Walker Drive Shopping Centre). It will run until Saturday May 5 at 7pm.

Everyone is welcome to join in as and when able, with the freedom to come and go as needed to over the duration of that time. Organiser and regional Burn 24-7 leader, Peter Gooch, issued a friendly request that those attending please respect the attitude of worship while in the venue by keeping conversations to a minimum.

This time, Burn 24-7 is excited to be collaborating with #imagine, for a re#imagine movement. This is following their annual Christian youth experience outside Port Elizabeth recently. "

After a teenager has been to #imagine, he becomes an 'imagineer'," explains #imagine leader, Anthony Jacobs. Re#imagine is an opportunity for "imagineers" to step into a leadership role themselves, applying and sharing what they've learnt during their #imagine experience.

Burning hearts in over 150 cities all across the globe are returning to their first love. The Burn 24-7 movement holds to

the conviction that revival requires the unity of the Church, across denominations, ethnicities, ages and languages. And because worship fuels mission, there will be an opportunity to take the love of Christ to the community in an outreach event on Saturday May 5. The outreach will start at 12.30-2.30pm, meeting at the Doxa Deo Church. For any additional information about the outreach, contact Peter Gooch on 083 657 4213.

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## Laura Story – Open Hands: Review



*Music review by Luchae Williams*

Contemporary Christian songbird, Laura Story, released her seventh studio album, titled **Open Hands**, in March 2017. The singer songwriter is no newbie to the Christian music circles,

having scooped a Dove award in 2002 for track *Indescribable* and a Grammy in 2012 for the popular worship ballad, *Blessings*.

The new album is opened with a stunner of a track, which some are lauding as the “one to look out for”, called ***Death Was Arrested***. Complete with Story’s sugar-sweet, but compelling, vocals and lyrics that speak about our victory through Christ’s work on the cross, I immediately found myself drawn in. Another beaut, that definitely deserves a listen if you’re a Laura Story newbie, is worship song ***Whisper***.

Title track, ***Open Hands***, features Third Day front man, Mac Powell. This modern worship track has a catchy chorus that speaks about surrendering all to “the one that’s strong”. My favorite part says: “Jesus I surrender all/Every victory and loss/Take it all/Take it all/Till all I have is open hands!”

Other more contemporary worship ballads include ***You Came Running*** and ***For The Love Of My King***. The latter was written in modern hymn style, complete with poetic verses and a more contemporary-sounding chorus.

I found ***Give You Faith*** to be an interesting addition to the album. The song, clearly an ode to Story’s children, speaks about choosing to leave them with a faith in God, more than wisdom, money and material possessions. The lyric so beautifully says: “I wanna give you faith, I wanna leave you hope / That you would know a love that never lets you go.”

Elements of pop can be found in songs such as ***Every Word You Breathe*** and ***Extraordinary***. The album finishes with a stunning, piano-driven worship track called ***Grace Abounds***. This song is one for the disheartened, in need of hope and a reminder of the power and beauty of grace. It is simple, classic and deep.

My introduction to Laura Story’s skillful songwriting was definitely a pleasure! She is able to turn Biblical concepts and principles into beautiful, poetic odes to and for God.

Give this album a go if you love pop-inspired Christian music that is more than just a one hit wonder. Laura Story is the real deal.

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## Free tickets on offer for Dewald Gouws concert in Cape Town on Saturday



Christian music artist Dewald Gouws is performing at a free concert at ChristGen Church Parow (Opposite the Ajax Football Club in Parow) on Saturday April 7 at the end of a Cape Town tour to promote his new song *But God*.

You can secure your free seat by contacting Ina Murison-McGowan on 082 850 4559. making sure to WhatsApp her your name so that your place is saved. Tickets are strictly limited.

“This song [ *But God* ] really has put Dewald right up there among the very best Gospel artists, not just here in South Africa but in the world too,” says Mighty Men Western Cape’s Piperjames.

He says that during his Cape Town trip which has included visits to schools, radio stations and local Christian, Dewald has also tirelessly promoted the upcoming [Mighty Men Western Cape Conference](#) at Moreson Farm, Malmesbury from October 5 to 7.

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## Breakthru Worship launching live album at Kingdom Come SA



Grant Clifton leading Breakthru Worship during the recording of their first live album.

“We want to make music that is a backtrack to revival!” says Grant Clifton, worship director along with his wife Bernice, at Breakthru Life Church in Johannesburg. Recently, Breakthru Worship, as they call themselves, completed their first live album recording and are excited to launch it at the Kingdom

Come Conference in April.

Grant shares their story here about how this project came into being: “Last year, towards the end of September, we hosted our annual Spring Conference here at BLC. We were honoured to have Dan Mcollum and Keith Ferrante from California with us. They both prophesied over us and the team, saying that God was going to release new songs for our nation and beyond from BLC.

### **Songs of hope and vision with an African feel**

“With the prophecy burning in our hearts we decided to dream about the possibility of recording an album and releasing the music at the Kingdom Come Conference. At that point we had one song written, but we felt a stirring to write more and see what God could do in such a short space of time. We intentionally tried to write songs of hope and vision, with an African feel as well, because we strongly believe in the sound that is in our nation.

“As the project was developing, each song came out of different encounters with God, messages that were being preached at BLC, and even prophetic artworks. We wrote a theme song for the conference, called Kingdom Come. The song is a song of hope, crying for more revival in our land. We felt a strong stirring in the Spirit as we sang it for the first time.

“Jumping ahead to 2018, by February, miraculously we had seven songs ready for recording – seven songs filled with hope, joy and vision for South Africa.

# KINGDOM COME



“We were also informed that Sean Feucht, the main worship leader from the USA, who was meant to lead most of the worship at the Kingdom Come conference, would no longer be available due to the expected birth of his fourth child. The conference organisers felt then instead of pursuing the option of getting another worship leader from abroad, that we need to rather have a local flavour when we worship together at Kingdom Come. Hence, every person in the worship teams at the conference is from our beautiful continent. This also set up a great opportunity for us to release the album and share songs of revival for South Africa, with South Africa.

“Early in March, we did the live recording at Breakthru Life Church. God’s presence was powerful as we sang words like ‘Bhodla Konyama ya kwa Judah, Phesukwesiswe (Roar Lion of Judah over this nation)!’

“With just two days of post-production, the album was sent for final mixing and mastering, and will be ready to be launched at the Kingdom Come Conference.

**Grace for creativity and acceleration**



“What astounded me with this project was to feel God’s hand on the process, and His grace for creativity and acceleration. In all the projects I’ve been involved with before, I’ve never seen something of such quality and presence come together so easily and quickly. All I can see is that God is in this, and that His heart to see worship rise from Africa, worship that’s passionate and celebrates the diversity of what He’s doing in our land. We can’t wait to share the music with this nation!”

For more information, please visit [www.breakthru.life.co.za](http://www.breakthru.life.co.za) or follow Breakthru Life Church on Facebook. The music will also be available on digital platforms after the Kingdom Come Conference.