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The Christian parody band ApologetiX brings its unique brand of music and message to Yankton's Calvary Baptist Church May 29. (Courtesy photo)

ApologetiX

Christian Parody Band To Perform At Yankton's Calvary Church May 29

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Take an eclectic mix of familiar rock tunes spanning decades of music, spin it with a lyrical twist — all the while promoting strong Christian values and adding a large dose of humor — and you have described the basics for the Christian parody band ApologetiX.

"ApologetiX specializes in Biblical parodies of rock hits from yesterday and today," said band lead singer and spokesman J. Jackson. "We cover everything from Elvis to Eminem. It's kind of like 'Weird Al' Yankovic meets Billy Graham."

The group, which has released 17 CDs and claims to have a repertoire of more than 600 songs, will perform at Yankton's Calvary Baptist Church at 7 p.m. Saturday, May 29.

The group, based out of Philadelphia, travels extensively across the United States. It is making its third trip to South Dakota, but first since 2003.

"We performed at LifeLight back in 2000 and Belle Fourche in 2003," Jackson said. "I think we have been to every state except Hawaii since we have been to South Dakota. It has been a long time since we have been in South Dakota. But we are very excited to come back. Our drummer and two guitarists have not been to South Dakota since they joined the band after our last trip to the state and they are excited about seeing the area."

Jackson said that ApologetiX has a simple, two-fold mission: to reach the lost and teach the rest.

"ApologetiX is taken from the word 'apologetics,' which means the defense of the Christian faith," he said. "To do that, we take great music that has been written and rework the message to one of faith. Every song is based on Biblical Scripture. We are singing about something that we really believe is true. We believe the Bible is true and it can change people. It means a lot to us to be able to sing this."

The journey for the band, which has received American Christian Music awards for Alternative Artist and Song of the Year, was never supposed happen.

"I'd always been a lead singer, but shortly before becoming a born-again Christian, I had

started to really learn how to play the guitar," Jackson said. "I have a pretty good ear for music, so I started figuring out some of the old licks from some of the songs I used to like. However, I didn't feel right singing the words."

"Meanwhile, I was learning all of this incredible stuff in the Bible, and I wanted a way to help me remember it — things like the names of all the Apostles, the books of the Bible in order, Scripture verses, stories, etc. So I started writing the parodies to teach myself the Bible ... and the guitar."

He performed a song at a Bible study and it grew from there.

"We were doing this for a few years before I looked back and thought, 'Man I have been doing this for a while,'" Jackson said.

"Eventually we got a few other musicians together, and even then, we were just entertaining ourselves. We never thought of it as anything for more than ourselves. But it just grew and grew. It has gone on now for about 11 1/2 years. There are a lot of bands that don't catch on. We have been fortunate."

Because the band covers familiar tunes, Jackson said the crowds always have a good time at the show, and it is for all ages.

"It is just very wide-reaching," he said. "We try to have something for everyone. If you go to our concert, you will see multi-generations of the same family at the show."

Calvary Baptist youth pastor Jeremy Nelson said he is excited to have the first large concert at the new facility, and he expects a large crowd of people to be in attendance.

"I think everyone is very excited to come in and hear good music," he said. "This is something we always planned on doing with the new facility: to open the doors up to the community and invite them in as well as bring our congregation closer together."

To purchase tickets, call Calvary Baptist at 605-665-5594 or visit the band's Web site at www.apologetix.com.

"Even if you don't go to church often, you can come to the concert and share in the music. Because we don't take ourselves very seriously, you will find a message that connects," Jackson said. "We like to say we adhere to the message of the great theologian Mary Poppins, 'A Spoon Full of Sugar' goes a long ways."

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