

The Bontrager Family Singers



The family:

We live on a farm in the Midwest, and we love working and singing together! We say that we have two lives, and really we do. Life #1 is touring North America in our 45 foot bus and doing concerts. In Life #2, we work hard on a livestock and crop farm where we milk cows, garden, plant and harvest crops, and pack and unpack while we try to transition to or from Life #1. We love living all together in one (not huge) house and we are each other's best friends.

The ministry:

Our reason for traveling and singing is to share the love of Jesus. We want to tell others what Jesus has done for us and what He can do for them. We are also passionate about encouraging families to be strong in the Lord and to love one another. It is God who has called us to this ministry, and we endeavor to shine His light wherever we go. We sing at churches, festivals, camps, resorts, prisons, nursing homes, and street missions.

The style:

We sing Gospel songs of many different genres- hymns, praise songs, Southern Gospel, and more. We provide the instrumentation live using piano, acoustic bass guitar, violins, banjo, acoustic guitar, mandolin, and harmonica. Our style is varied and doesn't fit neatly into any category, but you could probably call us a bluegrass/Southern Gospel mix.

The beginnings:

People often ask us how and when we started singing. Way back when the kids were little, we sang together at family devotions. There weren't multiple harmonies or instruments back then- just Becky's guitar and a handful of voices. As the children got older, we decided to start music lessons. As they learned to play instruments, Becky began to take them to nursing homes to share their music with the residents. At some point, Marlin decided the whole family would go to the local Salvation Army soup kitchen to sing and play. Over a few years, we went there various times and were privileged to share with those dear people. One day in 2005, we were contacted about sharing music in South Carolina prisons. We put together a short program of songs and headed for South Carolina! Going into the prisons was a wonderful experience for all of us, and we knew we wanted to do it again. For the next several years, we made the trip down south, adding a few more concerts in churches along the way every time. In 2008 we were gone for three weeks and after that we started traveling much more than previously, going on a longer Southern tour and adding other trips throughout the year. By 2011 we spent as much time on the road as at home.