

Posted on Sat, Jul. 12, 2008

[reprint or license](#) [print email](#)

Faith Alive: Alan Gates, Member, East Highland United Methodist Church

What's your day job? I work for Alltech Office Solutions. I've been there two years. I go to customers' offices and fix their computers.

Who's someone you look up to? My dad. (The Rev. Dan Gates of East Highland). My father is my biggest hero. He is a great guy and everything he speaks is directly from the Bible. He's a hard worker and has such a passion for people. Anybody he meets is as close as a friend.

How long have you been a member of his church? For 10 years.

Who's in your family? My wife is Tracey. She's a surgical tech at St. Francis. Our children are Breanna, 9, and Olivia, who's 7.

Did you grow up in Columbus? Off and on. We were here until I was in sixth grade, then we moved to South Georgia. I was in the Air Force police for six years.

How long has your band been together? (Gates is in a group called the Pilgrimage Band with his twin brother, Jonathan, and two others -- Cliff Brewer and Kenny Comeaux). Two years. We call ourselves folk-grass. Our main point is to spread the word of Jesus. Not all of our songs are gospel songs. Our new release is called "Thank You, Soldier." ThankYouSoldier.com sends goodies to soldiers overseas and this CD goes into their care packages. It's based here.

Where all do you perform? We've been all over the state and we're going to Chattanooga later this summer. We average two or three concerts a month. I play guitar and sing.

Have you ever thought of becoming ordained like your dad? God would really have to call me. I like the music side and reaching people that way.

How did your band form? Through an organization called Pine Eden (a retreat center in Harris County). We all were at an Emmaus Conference there. Cliff and I worked together for years and we went on an Emmaus Walk and happened to be on the same one. They asked us to play on the music team but we weren't a band then. The first thing we did was play at Open Door. We have also played at the Valley Rescue Mission, St. Paul United Methodist Church, East Highland and Pierce Chapel (United Methodist).

Do you mostly play in churches? We mostly play in other places, like the Frog Hollow festival coming up later this month in Phenix City. (The band also performed Friday next to Ben & Jerry's on Veterans Parkway, as a benefit for Goodwill Industries.)

What do you get out of playing for other people? The four of us are like brothers. It's a way for us to get together and see each other. We don't want to be famous; we just enjoy it.

How many CDs do you have? We have three and we're working on a fourth one.

Where can people get them? Through our Web site, <http://www.pilgrimageband.com/>. If we're playing at a ministry, like Open Door, we donate to them or to <http://www.ThankYouSoldier.com>.