

History of the Gospel Choir 'Rejoice'

The Gospel Choir 'Rejoice' from Langenberg, Germany, was founded in 1996 by the organist and choirmaster Roland Orthaus, who still conducts the choir today.

Since its founding, the choir has had about **80 active members** who **enjoy the lively nature of Gospel music and who are inspired by the message of Gospels and Spirituals**. The choir sings this style of music in all its forms, ranging from simple three or four part all male/female vocal arrangements, to four part mixed arrangements. As well, they also perform more complex eight or ten part scores featuring **solo parts** which are **sung by soloists from the choir**.

Due to active co-operation with various youth organisations, this choir consists of many different generations who all get on well with one and other.

The choir is accompanied by the **'Rejoice Band'** which is comprised of piano, drums, an electric bass, and additional instruments when required.

Concerts in Langenberg and further afield, successful appearances at the **Krefeld Gospel Festival** and others in the Ruhr region, plus participation in the **Choir Olympics 2004** held in Bremen, have shaped the choir and led to its recognition well outside its home region.

In 2005, the choir was responsible for the staging of the 1st Langenberg Gospel Festival.

At the **World Choir Games** in Graz (Austria), where 440 choirs from 93 nations and over 20.000 singers competed against each other in 28 categories, the choir, much to its surprise, won a **golden diploma** and a **silver medal** in the category Gospels/Spirituals.



Impressive concerts in Graz, at the **Bottrop Gospel Night**, appearances at the **International Gospel Church Day** in Hannover (2008) and Karlsruhe (2010) and further features on **television** and in **radio** all then followed.

The first tour of the Gospel Choir in 2009 touched 3000 viewers. The viewers were carried away with the emotional depth and fast paced pieces of the choir. The 80 singers are still well remembered.

Two years of intensive work saw the successful completion of a very varied Spiritual and Gospel CD titled 'Celebrate'. This **studio produced CD** contains a selection of **extremely varied tracks ranging from the deeply emotional to fast 'up beat' numbers**.

This variety, plus many different musical effects of the highest quality, create a recording which can awake a wide spectrum of emotions in the listener.

In Spring 2010, the choir took part in and organized the **final concert** of the 'Night of Music' which is held each year in a different German state and is promoted by the **Federal Association of German Choirs and Orchestras**. Once again, in 2011 in Koblenz, the choir was chosen to represent the category Gospel Choir.

The Gospel Choir 'Rejoice' is looking forward to participate in the **World Choir Games in Cincinnati** in 2012. Here and on their onward journey to New Orleans, its members will be able to experience Gospel music and its roots 'first hand', mixing with American communities and choirs. The choir will once again experience church services and give concerts during this time in **Cincinnati and New Orleans**.