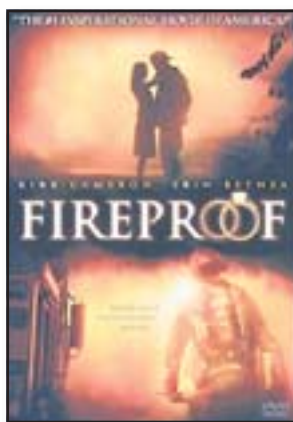


LIFE + FAITH

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2012

COMING UP IN LIVING SUNDAY
DOMINICA: A JEWEL OF THE CARIBBEAN



My column proved incendiary

Criticism of 'Fireproof' was more than some readers could tolerate



PAUL PRATHER
CONTRIBUTING COLUMNIST

I've been writing newspaper columns off and on for 25 years, and one thing I've always enjoyed about it is that people respond.

I realized long ago that no matter what I wrote, some people were going to love it and others were going to hate it, and folks on both sides were going to be eager to let me know. For me, that's the fun of venturing into the public square and expressing ideas: the give and take with readers.

Over time, I've learned a lot from readers. They've suggested angles I missed. They've pointed out my self-contradictions. They've even

changed my views.

Occasionally, though, I receive a flurry of responses that, in my humble opinion, are so far beyond the pale that I end up more irritated than enlightened.

My column published Jan. 28 was one of those cases.

I compared two films about evangelical Christians: *Fireproof*, which I found superficial and not terribly true to churchgoers' experiences, and *Higher Ground*, which was spot-on accurate, if grittier and more ambiguous. I preferred the latter.

I knew that a lot of my fellow born-again would disagree. *Fireproof* was wildly popular with our crowd. Heck, as I mentioned in the column, even my sister-in-law, who is one of my best friends, loved that movie.

Kentucky.com

Read the Jan. 28 column: Read Paul Prather's column about *Fireproof* versus *Higher Ground* at Kentucky.com.

When my column appeared, she and I had a big laugh about that. Like any reasonable person, Genean saw our differences about *Fireproof* as a minor matter of taste. To her, she has good taste and I don't. End of story.

But a number of people who responded to my column questioned not my taste in films, but my faith, my integrity and even my sanity.

Here's a sampling from the readers' comments on Kentucky.com. Some of the personal emails I received were

See PRATHER, B3

MATT MAHER, MAN OF MYSTERY

In life and faith, singer finds meaning in the unknown



MATTMAHERMUSIC.COM

Matt Maher has written songs such as *Alive Again* and *I Love You, Lord* that are now sung in contemporary worship churches around the world.

IF YOU GO

Matt Maher

What: The contemporary Christian artist in concert with opener Audrey Assad.

When: 6 p.m. Feb. 11.

Where: Mary Queen of the Holy Rosary Church, 601 Hill 'N' Dale Dr.

Tickets: \$25 at the door (cash or credit card only), \$20 at Benedictus Books and Gifts, 195 Moore Dr., until noon Feb. 11.

Learn more: Matt mahermusic.com, Maryqueen.catholicweb.com

LEXGO.COM

Hear Rich Copley's conversation with Matt Maher at his blog, Copious Notes, at LexGo.com.

By Rich Copley

rcopley@herald-leader.com

Matt Maher says a little mystery is a good thing, whether it's in his faith or his music.

Like every other pop singer, Maher has a Facebook page and Twitter account, but he's a little wary of them.

"It's created a sense of accessibility, and for artists who do use social media regularly, it creates a sense of connection, and I'm still trying to figure out if that's a good thing or not," says Maher, who performs Saturday night with Audrey Assad at Mary Queen of the Holy Rosary Church. "One of the things that helped the explosion of popular music was there was an element of mystery. It's like, 'Who are The Beatles?' They were four dots in Shea Stadium, and they play and they leave, and the only time we get to see them is on TV or a movie theater or live in concert.

"It created an aura of mystery about it, and mystery is an important part of the human

"Reverence is something even non-Christians ... miss about church. I think that's why people still walk into old cathedrals, because there is something mysterious and something reverent about it."

Matt Maher,
Christian recording artist

experience."

That includes the experience of faith.

Maher is an award-winning, best-selling Christian songwriter and recording artist. But he is a bit of an anomaly in contemporary Christian music as a practicing Catholic in a market dominated by evangelical Protestants.

He has been a big part of contemporary worship, but Maher says he sees people drawn to time-honored traditions and icons.

"Church for so long was like a game show, or it was like a TV show or a talk show — my youth service is like *Saturday Night Live*," Maher says. "I think there's a renewed interest in liturgy. I think that church as rock concert, church as X, church as Y have been tried. Are they inherently bad or not bad? I don't think so, but the question is, do they really get back to the core of what is the point of the church coming together?"

Maher says he thinks part of

See MAHER, B3

FAITH NOTES

Calendar of events through Feb. 29.

When Kingdoms Collide: Implications of the Two Kingdoms Doctrine. 10:30 a.m. Feb. 11. Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, 2255 Eastland Pkwy., Lexington. Free. (502) 316-2255.

Celtic artist Cynthia Matyi speaks at the Dean's Forum. 10 a.m. Feb. 12, 19. Christ Church Cathedral, 166 Market St., Lexington.

Founders Day. 11 a.m. Feb. 12. St. Paul AME Church, 251 N. Upper St., Lexington.

Financial Peace University 13-week course. 5 p.m. Feb. 12. Man o' War Church of God, 1501 Trent Blvd., Lexington. Information: Robert Simmons, (859) 245-4145.

■ 5 p.m. Feb. 12. Unity Christian Church, 5848 Ky. 36 W. Cynthiana. Information: Brian Kinsey, (859) 234-5113.

Celtic Eucharist. 5 p.m. Feb. 12. Christ Church Cathedral, 166 Market St., Lexington. Free. (859) 254-4497. www.cclex.org.

Catholicism: A Journey to the Heart of Faith. 6 p.m. Feb. 12, 19, 26. St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church, 604 E. Main St., Georgetown. (502) 863-3404.

Exodus Bible Study with John Oswalt. 7 p.m. Feb. 13, 20, 27. Francis Asbury Society Ministry Center, 1580 Lexington Rd., Wilmore. Free. www.francisasburysociety.com.

Titus Women's Bible Study, "Drawing Near." 7 p.m. Feb. 14, 21, 28. Francis Asbury Society Ministry Center, 1580 Lexington Rd., Wilmore. Free. www.francisasburysociety.com.

Taize Worship Service. 6:15 p.m. Feb. 15. Southern Hills United Methodist Church, 2356 Harrodsburg Rd., Lexington. Free.

Thirsting Thursdays: A Spiritual Happy Hour, hosted by Nia Community of Faith. 7:30 p.m. Feb. 16. United Methodist Leadership Center, 921 Beasley St., Suite 150, Lexington. (859) 294-9154 Ext. 113, or email The movement@windstream.net.

The Fountain. 7 p.m. Feb. 17. Centenary United Methodist Church, 2800 Tates Creek Rd., Lexington. (859) 317-1591. www.messiah-ministries.org.

Joyful Noise. By Georgetown College Gospel Choir. 10:55 a.m. Feb. 19. First Christian Church, 112 E. College St., Georgetown.

Black History Extravaganza: I Know Who I Am. 4 p.m. Feb. 19. St. Paul AME Church, 251 N. Upper St., Lexington. \$10.

Downtown Church Book Club. 4 p.m. Feb. 19. Faith House, 836 Melrose Ave., Lexington. Free. (859) 327-8690. www.facebook.com/dcutf.lex.

Henk Linker, organ recital. 4:30 p.m. Feb. 19. Christ Church Cathedral, 166 Market St., Lexington. Free. (859) 254-4497. www.cclex.org.

Community Ash Wednesday Service. 7 p.m. Feb. 22. Midway Christian Church, 123 W. Bruen St., Midway. (859) 846-4102.

The Molding of Generation Divas, presented by Sisters Road to Freedom. 9:30 a.m. Feb. 25. Lexington Senior Citizens Center, 1530 Nicholasville Rd., Lexington. Free; registration required. Sistersroadtofreedom@insightbb.com, d_angularone@insightbb.com.

Downtown Christian Unity Worship Exchange. 2 p.m. Feb. 26. Sts. Peter and Paul Regional Catholic School Lucille Little Theatre, 423 W. Short St., Lexington. \$4. (859) 327-8690. www.facebook.com/dcutf.lex.

Black History Program. 4 p.m. Feb. 26. Winburn Baptist Church, 1133 Winburn Dr., Lexington. (859) 294-9966.

Submit listings 10 days in advance at Calendar.kentucky.com by clicking on "add to our listings." Events can also be submitted to Faith notes, in care of Camille Weber, Lexington Herald-Leader, 100 Midland Avenue, Lexington, Ky. 40508. Questions? Call (859) 231-3557 or 1-800-950-6397, Ext. 3557, or email cweber@herald-leader.com (put "Faith notes" in the subject field).