



**WOMEN IN TEXAS MUSIC: STORIES & SONGS**  
*By Kathleen Hudson*

## CHRIS BOOKER

She said, “I write to express what happened to me and how I feel. Looking back I see that God has taken me on this incredible journey.” I was talking to Chris Booker of the band Exit 505 after a recommendation from her bandmate and friend, Danny Stisser, owner of AC Print. “Talk to Chris. She just finished a recording with Tony Young, and this is her first. She is passionate about her music and her songs.” I made the call.

Tony, one of the first people I met when I moved to Kerrville, has a long successful career working with musicians in the studio. He recorded the Jimmie Rodgers Tribute I did in 1996, and he is seminal in the recordings with Texas musicians doing songs with the poetry of Hill Country Youth Ranch kids. He worked on a rare Leon Russell recording at the Ranch in the state of the art studio, now being rebuilt after a big fire. And his talent moved into his kitchen when he recorded Chris as well as laying down tracks by many other musicians who joined in: Larry Nye to name one. Yes, in true Texas tradition, Tony has a recording studio in his house.

Chris describes her music as Christian oriented, with a message. “People started asking me if I had a recording after a gig,” she added. A retired nurse practitioner, she is following her bliss. The project of love has taken two years, and she is ready to bring the music out. Her reverbation.com site has the songs, the lyrics and her story. She started playing music in 2001 and got serious in 2005. She took fiddle lessons with Dick Walker who died a year ago, but she was able to include him on the recording.

Her brother has a global head injury from an electric shock 23 years ago. A music therapist works with him, and the results are profound. Misty Ecklund, that therapist, also plays with Exit 505 on sax, ukulele and clarinet. The band is a group of friends



who have joined together to follow their dream, to play and perform. You can hear them locally at private parties, at the Hunt Store, at local Wineries, and outdoor markets. Chris and her husband, Bill, have also been performing recently as a duo.

Living out her dream and her passion, Chris is a leader of the Praise Team at the United Methodist Church in Hunt, Texas, and she expresses her own beliefs in her songs. “Live” is the title cut on her CD, and the song speaks to her journey, sometimes through darkness. “I write when I am out running,” she explained. “All the songs have stories. I was a fan of *Gone with the Wind*, and the idea of ‘Live’ came from the one-liners in that book/movie.” She heard a country song saying you can’t change the world, and she mused, “But God can.” Then she wrote “Be Like Thee.” The CD is well-produced, of course, with master Tony Young at the board. “I never imagined I would be doing this,” she added as we ended our conversation in the Lion’s Den at Schreiner University.