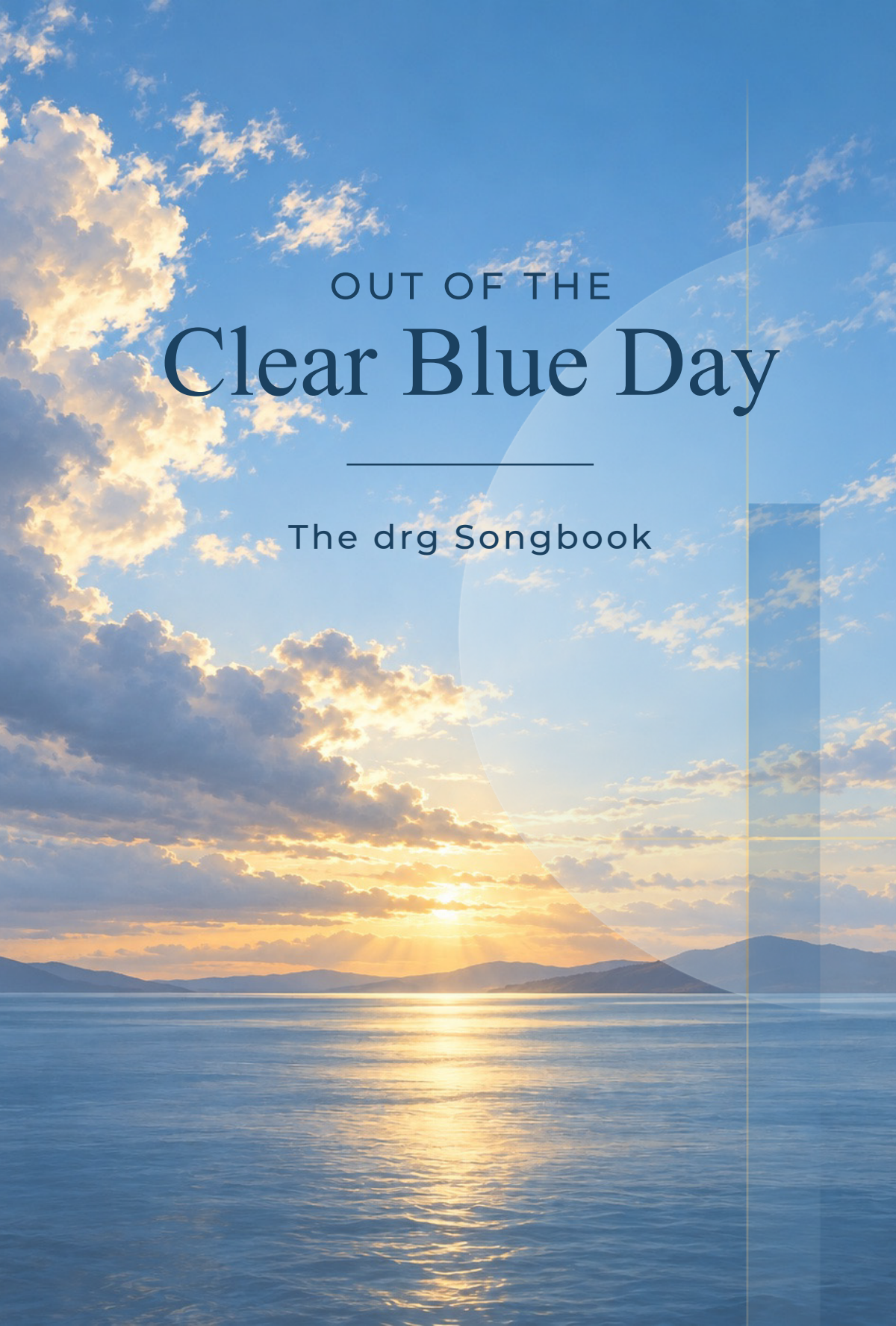


OUT OF THE
Clear Blue Day

The drg Songbook

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David Golden

I like the way the music moves me
I like to sing, I like to play
I like the words when they come to me
Out of the clear blue day

Preface

For as long as I can remember I have had a fascination with words. My mom told me that I was always trying to say bigger ones than I was able to read or pronounce. On one occasion I was reading business signs from the back seat of the car as we drove down the road. I said, “Mom, “at last the Beatles!” It was really “Atlas Batteries!”

My mother was a walking dictionary. She read every book she could get her hands on from their small country library. She could spell anything. Though clearly not to the same degree, some of that may have made its way into my DNA.

Sometimes as a boy, working the fields on the tractor where no one within miles could see or hear me, I would make up words to songs and sing them to the sky.

While serving a mission for the Church, something additional happened. I began to read! The beauty of scriptural language affected me as did the lyrics of hymns. Discourses by Church leaders broadened my vocabulary and some of it left deep impressions.

One leader’s talks always captured my interest. It was Neal A. Maxwell. Phrases like “faithful fellowship” or a “generous galaxy of gorgeous groupings” or the “complimenting content of Christ’s clarion call” sounded poetic to me and caused me to think of things in different ways. In my unrefined youth, I wondered if he learned how to do that from the Crosby, Stills and Nash song “Helplessly Hoping.” Probably not!

In any event, such were the beginnings of my life with alliteration and the wonderful wealth of words! Along the way, I wrote some poetry here and there, but merging the words with music was even more interesting to me.

And so, to the topic at hand. Over the years, I have written many songs and done my best to record them. Thus far, it is four albums worth totaling nearly forty songs. Capturing the lyrics in one place has been on my to-do list for some time. So here they are – all of them to date. Surely they are a form of inspiration, and perhaps even, in some instances, revelation. Either way, they have all come to me “out of the clear blue day.”

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Absolutely Not

The lyrics pretty much tell the whole story. I can still see the shoe box that Don, Lisa, Jerry, and Edith brought to the house. And the part about piddling on the rug was just exactly how it happened. Bottom line is the kids wanted a dog and Mom wasn't having it . . . until she did. RIP Tucker

Can we please get a puppy?
The kids all begged their mom
See, Donnie's dog had little ones
And we want to bring one home
He's the true pick of the litter
Sandy coat with markings white
Can we please get a puppy?
Mama say that it's alright
And she said

Absolutely not
There'll be no K-9 in this home
No stains upon this carpet
No spots upon this lawn
Someone else can have him
Let's make one thing very clear
Absolutely not
There'll be no dog living here

With pressure daily mounting
Something stirred and she could see
Perhaps this little stranger
Would bring something that we need
So against her better judgment
Expecting great regret one day
Her heart began to soften
But her head still had to say
Absolutely not

With great anticipation
Came that Sunday afternoon
When family came a bearing gifts
Oh it was none too soon

The shoe box kind of wiggled
He was cute enough to hug
Then he promptly strolled across the floor
And piddled on the rug
And she thought

Absolutely not . . .

The days and weeks passed quickly
As winter followed fall
And something kind of magic
Seemed to happen to us all
This curious companion
This personality
Begged his way into our hearts
‘Til it was clear to see

That there in quiet moments
With no one else around
He'd curl up beside her
And there without a sound
She would softly stroke him
And then he'd wanna play
Looking in those big brown eyes
I thought I heard her say

Absolutely not
They'll never take my friend away
You brought us what we needed
You brightened up our days
No one else can have you
Oh now listen what I say
Absolutely not
This dog is here to stay
She said, absolutely not
This dog is here to stay

All Work and No Play

My mom had interesting sayings that have stuck with me over the years. One of them was "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." The thought was always intriguing to me. As I approached retirement age, I began thinking about how much time and energy full-time work took, and in a moment of weakness, I scribbled down some offhand thoughts about the idea. In the end I knew that there needed to be some balance on the other end of that formula. Hence the concluding verse.

Life is so serious
And I am so curious
And all of this keeps me awake
Death by numbers
Could it pull me under?
And I wonder if it's a mistake - cause

All work
And no play
It will steal your heart
It will steal your days
All work
And no play
It will take its toll
It will make you pay

It's time to get over it
Time to advance the script
Time to balance the scale
All of this hurrying
This lopsided scurrying
Won't leave you to tell of the tale - cause

All work . . .

Jack is a dull boy
Out of control boy
He doesn't know when to quit
Nose to the grindstone
He doesn't go home
Digging himself into a pit

The sweat and the aching
Are there for the taking
And you just can leave it alone
But there is no guessing
And no better blessing
Then working your fingers to the bone, but

All work . . .

Autumn Nights

This song may be the oldest one written. I can remember thinking about the lyrics while sitting on the bed in our Provo apartment not long after we were married–so maybe nearly fifty years ago. I always liked looking up at night and thinking about eternity. Somehow, it ended up getting interwoven with fall and the seasons. One line came from a question my nephew asked his dad when I was living with them: "Dad, when the seasons go, where do they go?"

Autumn nights at last have come our way
Skies so starry bright they seem to say
Look as far as you can see
Someday here's what you can be
Over and over again

Seasons come and seasons fade away
Wonder in their absence where they stay
I don't know where you have been
But it's good to have you back again
Over and over again

Well, it feels right
On such an autumn night
I've got a feeling in my bones
A fall celebration
I comin' home

New crisp morning brings another day
Off to conquer all I'm on my way
Once again these weary eyes
Behold the sunlit eastern skies
Over and over
Over and over
Over and over again

Beat the Band

This song was written around 2005 after we moved into our house in Highland. A new music room made for new ideas and inspiration. I remember just playing some chords and singing nonsensical words to the end of finding a melody. As it progressed, the lyrics meandered from thinking about opposites, to my musical journey, to something about how no band could ever beat the Beatles! There's no use trying to make sense of it all, but the rhyming isn't bad.

Winter mornings, summer nights
Cold dark shadows, warm lights
Good and evil, black and white
War and peacetime, wrong and right

All this competition, opposites attract
You are my magnet, hurry back!

You might wonder where I've gone
Round the planet in a song
Star bright wonder, there's no end
Please remember not to bend

My imagination has carried me away
Tricky situation, not today!

Help me stay the course now
Help me take a stand
I can see, we can go the distance
If you carry me, I'll cut the resistance
Will you stay? Anyway?

Golden Slumbers, Abbey Road
Maxwell's hammer, should've known
Come together, Penny Lane
Sgt. Pepper, it's a shame

Most of them are sleeping
Wasn't like we planned
Feels like a race now
To beat the band

Bang bang
Shaves another customer
Groovin' up slowly

Bettin’ On You

Written in 2025. I was experimenting with some jazz-sounding chords and came across a progression that I really liked. I don’t know where the idea of all the ways people gamble came from, but they all came rushing to me. I hadn’t really intended to write a song a about gambling per se and was looking for another angle. The idea of taking a chance on a relationship turned the original idea in a whole different direction.

Some pull the handle
Some roll the dice
They’re runnin’ the table
Fixin’ the fights

All the action’s here to take
Ante up now don’t be late
Fortune favors the bold, I’ve heard its true
I’m bettin’ on you

Some play the ponies
Some deal the cards
They’re bettin’ the sports book
Playin’ the odds

All the action’s here to take . . .

Hang your hat on reason
Double down on trust
It’s easy to choose
You’ve got nothing to lose
And all of my money’s on us

Take your chances
Take a flier
Double or nothing
Feed the fire

All the action’s here to take . . .

Bite My Tongue

I was thinking about how negativity had become so prevalent in public and online discourse and was reminded that if you didn't have anything nice to say, the better idea was to not say anything at all.

Bashing and bravado
With stifling staccato
The message and the motto of the day

Here in the trenches
The works are filled with wrenches
Tell me what this verbal stench is
Who's to say?

So, I bite my tongue
And I hold my peace
And I'm careful, careful what I say
Better bite my tongue
And I hold my breath
And I'm counting, counting down the days

Hey now
Hey now

Less is more and more is less
When you're wandering through the wilderness
And some things are just better left unsaid

Wars of words like spasms
The divisions and the chasms
The cleverest sarcasm quickly spreads

So, I bite my tongue . . .

Hear no evil
See No evil
Speak No evil
Bite my tongue

What is wrong with you and me?
And what's wrong with the rest of these?
Who speak before we think and join the fray?

Once spoken no retraction
Equal opposite reaction
Crying foul without infraction
Let us pray

Time to bite my tongue . . .

Hey now, hey now

Blow Me Away (Don’t)

Over many years I had opportunity to visit and counsel people regarding their marriage relationships. This song came from many of the thoughts and feelings that those conversations produced.

If you looked inside of me
Took a chance to see what you could see
A not-so-calloused memory
It’s hard to believe, I know

If we took some time away
A separate space to share dreams and days
We might remember prior ways
It’s hard to say, I know

I'm a kite on your string now baby
Just a leaf in your breeze
A silent sail on your still quiet waters
Don't blow me away
Don't blow me away tonight

If I'd give some room to you
Let you finish, let you follow through
But you've got to understand me too
It’s hard to do, I know

I'm a kite on your string now baby . . .

False starts with happy endings
Can't live on love that's pending
You say it’s hard to let go
Hard to let go, I know

If we'd give us one good try
Finally get beyond the me, the I
In what just can’t be a do or die
It’s hard to get by, I know

I'm a kite on your string now baby . . .

Boy Blue

Years ago, I had a makeshift office in our basement where I would keep a desk and play guitar as time allowed. One day Zack was with me there. He was wearing blue Osh Kosh overalls. As I looked at him, I thought, hmm. . . "Little Boy Blue." The lyrics came quickly. I dropped "Little" from the title to avoid confusion with the well-known poem.

Little boy blue I'm playin' for you
Can you hear me?
Come here to stay, to brighten my days
And be near me

If you could talk to me
What would you say?
Tell me of from where you come
So far away

Little boy blue I'm looking at you
Can you see me?
Lost in the skies of your wondering eyes
Could you be me?

If you could talk to me . . .

Somehow I see
You are wiser, so much wiser than me
Will you free me?

Little boy blue I'm praying for you
Can you feel it
Hand in hand, man to man
Spirit to spirit

If you could talk to me . . .

Little boy blue I'm playing for you
Little boy blue I'm talking to you
Little boy blue I'm praying for you
Can you hear me?

Bullet Proof Heart

Some parts of this song were written over 30 years ago, but I never seemed to be able to finish it. The idea had to do with someone who had lost their faith and closed their heart to spiritual things. Piece by piece the song began to fill out. Restored gospel truths would need to be part of their journey back. Invitations to return would become important. But, in the end Jesus Christ was the only thing that could penetrate a bullet proof heart. (The second verse didn't make it into the song for concern over it running too long.)

Note: The chorus, beginning with "fair as the moon," comes from scripture both ancient and modern and has been used in modern times to describe the Church's future destiny and the power it will wield as the kingdom of God on earth. It serves as a reminder of the Church's divine commission to gather Israel and prepare the world for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

Ruffled your feathers, stepped on your toes
Stripped you of ego, everything goes
All of this trouble, all from the start
In a foundry of conflict
You forged a bullet proof heart

So, you set up these borders, threw up these walls
Sometimes I just can't get through them all
And this mote that surrounds you
It's not clear to see, if it protects me from you
Or protects you from me

Fair as the moon, clear as the sun
Terrible as an army with banners
Straight is the arrow, sharp is the knife
Welcome the cross that brings us to life

So, you live in the moment, the here and the now
Wondering if there's something more to it all
Something is turning, something is new
Possibly real, possibly true

Fair as the moon, clear as the sun . . .

Searching now to find a way
Better still to seize the day
Come away now, come away with me!
Buried in the lost and found
Finally, some solid ground
Here it is, the offer to be free

No intimidation, no heavy hand
No favored nation can undo where you've been
Only one answer, one missing part
Just a bullet of love to pierce a bullet proof heart

Fair as the moon, clear as the Sun . . .

Catch

One day I was sitting in my office and, for a reason I don't remember, came across the word "catch" that was used in a couple of different ways in succession. Suddenly I was writing down all the common phrases that employed this word. It was amazing! Bit by bit, the verses came together and when combined with a "catchy" country tune, I had a new song.

Catch a movie, catch a show
Catch my breath and here we go
Catch my meaning, catch a thief
Catch my fancy, no relief

And I'm tryin' to get ahead of it
Ahead of it, ahead of it
Tryin' to make the most of it
The most of it, the most of it
Everybody's got a plan
Catch it if you can

Catch my drift, catch the flu
Maybe you can catch it too
Catch a glimpse, catch my eye
Maybe catch me in a lie

And I'm tryin' to get ahead of it . . .

Catch you when you fall
So you don't fall so far
Reach up to the sky
And catch a falling star
No time to take it easy
It's time to catch the beat
When I catch up with you
You're gonna catch some heat!

Catch a ball, catch a wave
Catch my name and call me Dave
Catch the spirit, catch the wind
Catch a ride and jump on in

Catch phrase, catchy tune
And now we're almost through
Catch the fire, catch a cold
She's a catch and don't you know

I'm tryin' to get ahead of it . . .

Christmas in America

Far away from where the Christmas story we sing about each year occurred, another story unfolded. It's a different story, but the message is the same. Many years ago, I captured it in the lyrics of this song. For the scriptural background, see the following verses from The Book of Mormon – Another Testament of Jesus Christ*. (Helaman 13:1-4, Helaman 4:4; 3 Nephi 1:6,9,10-13)*

Prophecy given us
Taught from these walls
Told us a Savior would come
And still we hold fast
To those words from the past
And believe, yes we believe in

Christmas, sing out
Christmas, let it ring out
Oh we pray for Christmas
Christmas in America

Promises, promises
Foolish and vain
The time for your wonder has passed
For tradition you'll die
Lest your sign in the sky appear
Oh it must appear as

A day and a night, Christmas
And a day that were light, Christmas
A day and a night, and a day that were light
Christmas in America

A troubled disciple falls to his knees
And prays to his God up above
This is my prayer
That the people be spared their lives
Oh spare them their lives and they'll

Sing out, Christmas
Let it ring out, Christmas
Oh Christmas will save us
Christmas in America

What of this story?
Calling out of the dust
Another Christmas witness
Calling to us

Lift up your head and be of good cheer
For behold the time is at hand
On this night shall the sign come
And on the morrow
Come I into the world
Oh, tomorrow I come from

A day and a night, Christmas . . .

Count On It

This song went through several iterations before it finally landed in its current state. It started as a bluesy rock number with the title "Take it to the Bank." But as the lyrics began to take shape, it took on a more chill vibe speaking to different things you can rely on–the most important being one's commitment to their life companion.

Sun's a rising, that's a fact
White is white and black is black
There are things on which you can rely
Like the night that follows day
And the day that follows night
Like the night that follows day

You can count on it
Count on it
Let me tell you true
Ain't no one for me but you
Let me tell you true

Left is left and right is right
And all the darkness can't withstand the light
There are things on which you can rely
Like the changing of the seasons
And the stars that light the skies
Like the changing of the seasons

You can count on it . . .

I've seen love that's hot and cold
And I've seen love that's hard to find
I've seen love that wearing out and growing old
And I've seen love that's biding time

That's not the kind of love I have for you
A love that never waivers, never moves
See my love for is actual
Totally contractual
But most of all it's factual

So this is what you do
Count on it

What goes up, bound to tumble down
Like this world that's always spinning round
There are things on which you can rely
Like God up in His heaven
And the rising of the tide
Like God up in His heaven

You can count on it . . .

Don’t Spare the Horses

“Home James, and don’t spare the horses” is a 19th-century command used by wealthy passengers urging their coachman to drive as fast as possible. It occurred to me that the idea went well with my dislike of being alone, particularly without my wife. That, combined with Bill Withers song “Ain’t No Sunshine When She’s Gone” all ended up being the gist of the song.

You’ve been away now
Such a long, long time
Want to see you
Don’t you know that I’m
Lost without you
Don’t like being alone
Lost without you
But now you’re coming home

Don’t spare the horses

You know I love you
I know you love me too
We’ve been round the block
Seen a thing or two
Got some time left
Got some more to do
Got some wood to chop
Before this movie’s through

Don’t spare the horses

You’ve got your reasons
And I’ve got mine
No need to dither
No wasting time
It’s you and me girl
You’re on your way
Coming home to me
You’re back to stay

Gotta hurry up now
Don’t you take your time
Gotta get a move on
Don’t you know that I’m
Dying to be with you
Just wanna see your face
Absence makes the heart ache
Time to pick up the pace

Don’t spare the horses

Ain’t not sunshine when she’s gone
Ain’t no music in my song
It’s you and me girl
We’re our way
Back together
Happy Day

Don’t spare the horses!

Fork in The Road

Sometimes when driving down the road, observing the thousands of cars coming and going, I would wonder aloud "where are they all going and where do they all come from?" I wondered about their origins and destinations geographically. Then my mind wandered to where they may be going in other aspects of their lives.

Where are they all going?
Where'd they all come from?
Some headed for the kingdom
Some waiting for the kingdom to come

Some of them in a hurry
Some of them takin' their time
Some get a little lost along the way
Some still tryin' to make up their mind

Here on Heaven's highway
It's time to go
This or that way
There's a fork in the road

What are you trying to tell me?
What are you trying to say?
What is it that you want from this?
And how's that gonna play?

Here on Heaven's highway . . .

Forever is a long time
Coming for you like a fast-moving train
Forever is a long time
Get it right or try again

Comin' from behind now
Bringing up the rear
Better late than never
What are you doing here?

Here on Heaven's highway
You should know
It's this or that way
There's a fork in the road

Note: *This song was later recorded in a different way under the name "Heaven's Highway" with a modified style and a couple of word changes.*

Good Song

This is pretty much my musical biography. The Beatles' 1964 appearance on the Ed Sullivan show had an indescribable effect on me. The music grabbed hold of me. I would save up my allowance to buy records and spent hours listening to them on my mom's console stereo.

Sometimes as a boy, working the fields on the tractor, where no one within miles could see or hear me, I would make up words to my own songs and sing them to the sky. Music of all genres has given me a lifetime of joy. For me, to this day, there is truly nothing like a good song.

Seems like only yesterday
That I would dream my life away
And think of all the things I'd say and do

Yea, I had lots of plans for me
And I'd make up these melodies
And sing 'em to the sky so crisp and blue

I hear it, I hear it now
You hear it, we hear it now

Every dollar I could get
I'd spent it on the latest hit
And I just knew this sound would get me through

I knew their faces, knew their names
I'd memorize the words they sang
And I pretended I could sing 'em too

I hear it, I hear it now
You hear it, we hear it now

There's nothin' like a good song
One that makes you move
One that makes you strong
Can't beat a good song
One that makes you fly
One that lasts you all night long

Well it was 1964
And they were really fab those four
I heard ‘em on that Sunday evening “shew”

The music grabbed a hold of me
Now may it never set me free
Cause when I’m finished playin’, then I’m through

I hear it, I hear it now
You hear it, we hear it now

There’s nothin’ like a good song
One that makes you move
One that makes you strong
Can’t beat a good song
One that makes you move
One makes you want to sing along

Some like hip hop, some like rap
I’m ok will all of that *
I like my blues, I like my jazz
And all that new age razzmatazz

I like my tabernacle choir
And how that music takes me higher
I like my country
And all those big screen movie scores

I like my folk, I like my pop
I like my instrumental stuff
I like my soundtracks and my classics
And my rock ‘n roll!

There’s nothin’ like a good song . . .

*Original lyric was “don’t’ like hip hop, don’t like rap. You’ll just have to deal with that.” Probably should have kept it like that!

Have You Heard of Santana

One day Zack came home from a junior high science class where his teacher had been listening to Carlos Santana's "Smooth." Zack asked me, "Hey dad, have you heard of Santana?" The comeback album Supernatural *was a big hit. I had some educating to do! Fast forward, twenty years later I was teaching my grandson Mack guitar and, in the process, introduced him to "Smooth." His mom called me and said, you won't believe this–Mack came home from your house and asked: Hey mom–have you heard of Santana? Three generations!*

Lyin' on the floor
Head against the speaker
Latin rhythm moving
Vinyl spinning fast
The 70's were rockin'
Never could imagine
How anyone could play like that
Let the music take me back

Turn it up
Turn it up

That's when I heard of Santana
When I understood cool
That's when I learned that an instrument
Could talk to you
Feels like butter
Cuts like steel
And when he hits the high notes
This is how you feel!

Thirty years later
I could feel the groove
New Supernatural vibe
Comin' on through
Boy came home from school
Said the teacher played a song
Ain't no hesitation
It's the second generation

The licks are fine
It's new this time
Hey Dad . . .

Have you heard of Santana?
Do you understand cool?
Did you know that an instrument
Could sound so smooth?
Feels like butter
Cuts like steel
And when he hits the high notes
This is how you feel!

Twenty years later
Still listening to the riffs
Daughter dialed me up and said
You won't believe this
Boy came home from your house
Said you played a song
Ain't no hesitation
It's another generation

It's not the end
He's back again
Hey Mom . . .

Have you heard of Santana . . .

Heaven's Highway (Redux)

This song was previously recorded under the name "Fork in The Road." Over time I began playing it live in a different style and made some slight changes to the lyrics. The feel was different enough that I decided to give it a new name and record the new one. See the background for "Fork in The Road."

Where are they all going?
Where'd they all come from?
Some headed for the kingdom
Some waiting for the kingdom to come

Some of them in a hurry
Some of them taking their time
Some get a little lost along the way
Some still trying to make up their mind

Here on Heaven's highway
It's time to go
This or that way
There's a fork in the road

What are you trying to tell me?
What are you trying to say?
What is it that you want from this?
And how's that gonna play?

Here on Heaven's highway. . .

Forever is a long time
Coming at us like a fast-moving train
Forever is a long time
Nothing ventured, nothing gained

Coming from behind now
Bringing up the rear
Better late than never
What are you doing here?

Here on Heaven's highway. . .

Here They Come

As the number of our grandkids continued to grow, I felt what I'm sure everyone else who has experienced the same thing has felt. Family is a journey that keeps expanding, and with it come all sorts of new experiences, emotions, concerns, and wonders. The lyrics tell the rest.

Never could imagine that this day would come
When our kids are havin' kids
Look what we've begun
What a new adventure
Never be the same
All these little people
To carry on the name

Here they come
And here they are
Blazing into all our lives
Each like a shooting star
And I can tell
It's meant to be
We're meant to see them born
And wonder at the mystery
And here they come

Journeyed here from somewhere dear and far away
Could it be someone we know
Sent them on their way?
Wonder what they'll be like
When they come of age
Each to live a story
Each to write a page

Here they come . . .

Every generation's
Sure to feel this way
Looking back, looking forward
In between we stay

We used to sing about
The circle would come round
Well here it is, and here we are
And baby here they come
Yes and here they come

Worry sometimes ‘bout the things that they will see
Where they’ll go, what they’ll do
Who it is they’ll be
Hope they won’t be fearful
Hope they’ll find their way
Hoping that like you and me
One day they can say

Here they come . . .

I Like the Way

I was sitting in my office one day looking for an idea for a final song to complete the Time Will Tell *album. Four simple notes just sort of came out of the guitar and the words "I like the way" just seemed to come along with them. I truly felt a rush of inspiration as I made notes of a few of the things that made me happy and were meaningful to me in significant ways. The final touch was the hope that all of these would one day be a part of my heaven.*

I like the way
The seasons come and go
I like the sun on my face
I like the spring
And how it makes things grow
I like my September days

And when we get to heaven
It will be September forever
The sun on my face
The sun on my face

I like the way
I can look up at night
I like that it never ends
I like that I can see forever
I like the peace it brings

And when we get to heaven
We will see forever
The peace it brings
The peace it brings

I like the way
That music moves me
I like to sing, I like to play
I like the words when they come to me
Out of the clear blue day

And when we get to heaven
We will sing forever
And we will play
And we will play

I like the way
That you smile at me
I think that you are gold
I like that we like to be together
I like your hand to hold

And when we get to heaven
We will be forever
And hold your hand
And hold your hand

In My Bones

On one occasion I was sharing my testimony of Jesus Christ with a group of missionaries. In an attempt to help them sense how deeply I felt about Him I said that I could "feel it in my bones." Sometime later I came across the verse found in Jeremiah 20:9. "But His word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones." I knew there was a song somewhere in all of this and I knew that it was important that the Restoration be a part of it.

Things I know 'bout Jesus
Came from a grove of trees
From a pillar of light and a verse from James
And a boy upon his knees

Now I can be forgiven
And I can live again
And when He's done with all my trouble
I can be with Him

The way I feel about Him
He's the surest thing I know
Words will never do Him justice
All I can say
It's in my bones

Remember when he healed those lepers?
Remember when he made 'em clean?
Well that was but a harbinger
Of what he'd do for you and me

The burden of our peace was on Him
And with his stripes we're healed
An angel rolled the stone away
An empty tomb revealed

The way I feel about Him . . .

I know He came the first time
And I know He'll come again
To reign on earth a thousand years
And I can't wait 'til then

You may not know what I know
How He came to other sheep
They felt the tokens in his hands
And worshipped at his feet

They knew of their Messiah
Long before He came
Messengers foretold it all
And etched it on some plates

The way I feel about Him . . .

I feel it in my bones
Like a fire in the bones
It's in my bones

Knowing Somehow

It's always exciting to get a new guitar. Zack and I had just purchased a black Fender 12-string, and I was testing it out in the small laundry room in our Murray home. The room had a nice echo, so that's where I was playing when I stumbled onto a chord structure that produced something I really liked. The lyrics came later. Thoughts about our mortal journey and somehow knowing things that you can't see or touch all blended together into a song.

You've got a long way to ride this train
You've got a ways to go
You've got a few things to learn down here
You've got some grit to show

Seemed like Christmastime would never come
When we were young and small
Now the years just seem to melt away
Can't keep track of it all

Wonder of wonders when we all come to find
Things that are real are never bounded by time

I've seen a lot of folks get old and grey
I've seem them filled with doubt
I've see the terror in their sorry eyes
When they know time's running out

Wonder of wonders when we all realize
Things that are real we cannot see with our eyes

Welcome to here
Welcome to now
Welcome to feeling and vision
And knowing somehow

You've got a feeling that you may not belong
A stranger in the land
Something calling you from somewhere else
Something like it was planned

Wonder of wonders when we all understand
Things that are real we cannot touch with our hands

Knowing somehow

Little Noises

When our kids were little, we were in the camp of "you sleep in your own bed" as far as they were concerned. That usually worked. . . until it didn't. This song is the story of one of those nights when we let all the discipline go out the window. It started out like any other night, but ended up with five of us in the same bed.

Little noises, late at night
Someone has awakened
A quiet figure, by my side
Trembling and shaking
Quietly I hear her whisper

Mommy can I sleep in your bed tonight?
I am so afraid and alone
Please can I sleep in your bed tonight?
Just this time I promise
Mommy keep us warm

Tossing and turning, sleepless child
Stumbles down the hallway
Fading in and out am I
Here's yet another stowaway
Quietly, I hear him whisper

Mommy can I sleep in your bed tonight . . .

How can all of these bad dreams
Come in one night?
And how will all of these children
Fit between us?
Sleep between us?
Snuggle tight!

Now abandoned, and realized
Where are all the others?
Left deserted, she must find
Her sister and her brother
Quietly I hear her whisper

Mommy can I sleep in your bed tonight . . .

Just this time I promise
Just one time we promise
'Til next time we promise
Mommy keep us warm

Look What the Wind Blew In

There's a lot of biography here, but the message is this: Just like for everyone else, the people, places and experiences of my life have blown across my path in unpredictable ways. There have always been new and unexpected events that have stuck with or shaped me. The whole of my life, all of it, "the lock, stock, and barrel," has been an amazing adventure and something I look back on with wonder. And often it's been interwoven with a song.

Fatherless rapscallion
Trouble-bound
Mama's at the steel mill
He's taken by the sound
Bullies in the backyard
Plotting his demise
Battles to be fought alone
Innocent surprise

And it was
Lock, stock and barrel
Go, fight, win
Tumbleweed carol
Look what the wind blew in

City kid to farm boy
New dad, new life
Worked him like he never worked
Probably saved his life
You don't have to like it
It's what she used to say
Life's no bed of roses
Now she's gone away

And we sing
Lock, stock, and barrel . . .

Some might fool you for a moment
Some might try to tell you no
Sometimes you can push the limit
But when you get it then you've got it
And there's just no letting go

Hesitant disciple, unprepared
Salvaged in San Pedro, rescued in a prayer
Long ago she turned his head, truth is she still does
Lonesome when she leaves the room, loves her just because

With her it's
Lock, stock, and barrel . . .

Loose Ends

Songwriting is an interesting undertaking. Sometimes words and music will come to you in an instant. Sometimes one or the other will come without a companion. And sometimes there is one that just sits unfinished. Of course, this is true not only about songs, but about the myriad of other things in life that we have been unable, unwilling, or otherwise slow to get to.

Gather up all your dreams and
Put them in a box
Ome day you'll sift through it
Find what you've lost

There's business unfinished
There are things left undone
Some of your own doing
Others are handed down

Sometimes it comes together
Sometimes it won't
Loose ends get left hanging
They come and go

Grandiose ideas
Somehow just seem to stall
Such promise, excitement
The last big rise and fall

A feeling unsettled
Loose ends are all around
Finish what you started
Tie it off and tie it down

It's been a long time now
And there it sits
Closure still evades you
Could this be it?

Soon you may perfect it
Blow off the dust and see
You'll search for connection
Then what will be will be

Lucky Stars

Things get difficult for everyone at one point or another. For some, challenges seem insurmountable and never ending. For those, we pray, we mourn, and we realize that our own plight is much less serious than theirs. In the meantime, we thank God that when the tables turn, there are people and a Savor, who help us along the way when we need them.

It can get crazy, and it can get tough
And you can get jaded
And you can get roughed up
Oh it's true
What's one to do?

Never sell 'em short, and never bet against
Everyone that love's you
And all the prayers they send
To see you through
Here what you do

Count on me and I'll count on you
And we'll get through this night
Walk into the wind
And you will walk into light
You can bet your bottom dollar
And you can bet the farm
You can bet your boots now baby
And you can thank your lucky stars
That you are who you are

Well the thieves, they took the cities
And the jobs have left the towns
There's killing round the world
So much trouble we could drown
Somehow you knew
Just what to do

Well me, I like the bright side
And it all goes up from here
So stiffen up your spirit
And let's carry on
I hear a sound that's true
It's up to you

Count on me and I'll count on you . . .

Mama told me
There would be days like this
Rainy days, cloudy days, so dark and dreary
But here comes the sun now
I can feel it in your kiss

Count on me and I'll count on you . . .

Overtime

Overtime began with an idea about life stresses and that's mostly what it's about. Admittedly, however, the chorus and the bridge meander a bit. It's probably best not to spend too much effort trying so find some deep meaning in those parts. Maybe I just like the way the words sounded or maybe I just thought it was clever to talk about other things one could or should get "over."

One step forward
One step back
Make a little headway
On your one-way track

You say life is pilling up
Like papers in a tray
And all your troubles are pilling on
They cause you sleepless nights
They bring you endless days

And its overtime, we can't waste a minute
Don't you undermine, all the way we've come
In your pantomime, you must stop pretending
Or its overtime, overtime again

Oh, you like it buttoned up
You like to run it lean
And all your type A, left-brained stuff
Keeps your workspace clean

Truth is that you're running late
You're running out of time
Playing catch up is a sorry fate
When you're so ahead
But getting so behind

And it's overtime . . .

Over the ocean
Over the hill
Over the rainbow
We should just get over it
All this overkill

We’re working overtime . . .

Railroad

On winter nights driving to and from the chapel on Nena Way, I would often hum or sing a song. Somewhere along the way, the 19th century folk song "I've Been Working on the Railroad" *came into my head. I have no idea when or where I learned the lyrics to it, but there they were. As I sang, a new melody developed. I sang it over and over until it became the natural way to sing it. I like it better than the original, but that's just me.*

I've been workin' on the railroad
All the livelong day
I've been workin' on the railroad
To pass the time away

Can't you hear the whistle blowin'
Rise up early in the morn
Can't you hear the captain shoutin'?
Dinah blow your horn

Dinah won't you blow
Dinah won't you blow
Dinah won't you blow your horn?
Dinah won't you blow
Dinah won't you blow
Dinah won't you blow that horn?

Someone's in the kitchen with Dinah
Someone's in the kitchen I know
Someone's in the kitchen with Dinah
Strummin' on told banjo and singin'

Fe fi fideli oh
Fe fi fideli oh
Fe fi fo fum
Fideli oh fum
Strummin' on the old banjo

Rainstorm

I love to go out on the front porch and watch it rain. One day I was doing just that when a song came into my head. The lyrics, melody, and guitar accompaniment came in a rush, almost all at once. I sat down and wrote it down and went in the living room and played it for Deanna. Next time the sky gets dark, go out on the porch. You'll smell it coming!

Somethin' bout a rainstorm
Brewing in the distance
You can smell it coming
This desert begs assistance

Heaven's windows open
Like God has heard a prayer
Reminds me when I'm thirsty
He is always there
And I'm hearin' seein' smellin' feelin'
The rain come down

Thunder its announcement
Lightning cracks the sky
Darkened clouds thy gather
Cast shadows on my eyes

Heavens windows open . . .

Well here it comes
Let it pour
Give us rain
Pray for more

Watchin' from my doorstep
Now it all subsides
Everything is clean again
And I am so alive

Heavens windows open . . .

Sand Dollar

When our kids were young, we took summer trips to Newport Beach. In the early morning, we would grab a bucket and walk the shoreline to look for seashells. Sand dollars were always a big prize. This song came from one of those mornings.

Grey day on the beach, waves roll in
Morning walk along the shoreline's rim
I don't know what we may see
But it's good to be here
Just you and me

Find me a sand dollar, big and round
Be careful not to break its flowered crown
Fragile treasure from the sea
I'll find you a sand dollar
Find one for me

Sun breaks through the clouds, day begins
Spades and pales appear, sandy things
Children laughing, as it should be
It's good to be here
Just you and me

What's inside?
Secret doves that fly away
Hey hey!

Find me a sand dollar . . .

Things are simple here, glad we came
We feel different and yet still the same
Though our footprints will wash away
It's good to be here
Wish we could stay

Find me a sand dollar . . .

Sisters of Sojourn

After both my mom and dad died, I realized that, along with my sisters, we were pretty much the only ones left in our family with a connection to the past. I thought back on all of it and felt a strong, new motivation that the things that mattered most were on our shoulders to preserve and pay forward.

Dark now the stage
Where generations past
Acted out their mortal moments
All gone home
All boarded up

Except in memory
Where sacred smiles and treasured traits
Still flood our lives with light
Of acts and scenes and sayings and stories
Blessed memories

Now of all this history
We three remain
The bridge from then to what will be
To us more brightly was
The torch passed than to them
Obliged we now become
To pass it even more so

Now of all this history . . .

And so with you
Steadfast sisters of sojourn
Beautiful bookends of my birth
A new closeness
Born of their death
The spotlight shines on us
Shines on you and me
Shines on us

So Pretty a Sail

*Years ago, I came across a poem written by Eugeen Field called "*Wynken, Blynken, and Nod*." I was captivated by the imagery of these three children flying around in a wooden shoe, casting nets to capture the stars. I decided it needed some music and a new name.*

Wynken, Blynken, and Nod one night
Sailed off in a wooden shoe
Sailed on a river of crystal light
Into a sea of dew

Where are you going, and what do you wish?
The old Moon asked the three
We've come to fish for the herring fish
That live in this beautiful sea
Nets of silver and gold have we
Said Wynken Blynken and Nod

The old Moon laughed and sang a song
As they rocked in the wooden shoe
And the wind that sped them all night long
Ruffled the waves of dew

The little stars were the herring fish
That lived in that beautiful sea
Now cast your nets where'er you wish
But never afeared are we
So cried the stars to the fishermen three
Wynken, Blynken, and Nod

So all night long their nets they threw
For the fish in the twinkling foam
Then down from the sky came the wooden shoe
Bringing the fishermen home

'Twas all so pretty a sail it seemed
As if it could not be
And some folk thought 'twas a dream they'd dreamed
Of sailing that beautiful sea
But I shall name you the fishermen three
Wynken, Blynken, and Nod

Wynken and Blynken are two little eyes
And Nod is a little head
And the wooden shoe that sailed the skies
Is a wee one's trundle-bed

So close your eyes while Daddy sings
Of the wonderful sights that be
And you will see all the beautiful things
As you sail on the crystal sea
Where the old shoe rocked the fishermen three
Wynken, Blynken, and Nod

Solid Yellow Line

During my working years, I spent a lot of time on the freeway. To help move my travel a little faster to and from work, I bought a rapid pass that allowed me to drive in the HOV lane. Day after day, I drove next to yellow stripe that lined the left side of the road. My thoughts meandered from here to there on these journeys as I drove, ultimately looking for the sign that would let me exit the HOV lane and get to my destination. Yes, it's a strange thing to write a song about.

Been spending lots of time here
And for the most part I don't mind
It's time for me to lay low
So hard to simply say no
I'm just waiting for a sign
There are lots of places
You can wear the faces
You can make this riddle rhyme

Will it make you crazy?
Will you be confined?
Put me through my paces
I'm touchin' all the bases
And I'm just hoping for a sign
Though it may not appear so
There's lots of room in here so
You'll like it too, just give it time

Sometimes I can disappear
And go away in time
It settles down the fears
Dries up all the tears
While I'm looking for a sign
Then suddenly I'm back
Never really left the track
And all this mystery is mine

Move on
You should look over your shoulder
Stay strong
Check your blind spot
You're getting older!

I see you crawl in your frustration
While I am all but flyin'
I'm just a solo act
No fiction, only fact
You'll be praying for a sign
There is no secret here
You too can join me dear
Pay the price, or pay the fine

There are white lines
Some are double
Some are broken, and that's fine
They are so clear and free
Now they're calling me
And I'm just begging for a sign
Still, the one you see
That really speaks to me
Is that solid yellow line

Tame the Mystery

This was a simple guitar chord progression trying to find a lyric. I was looking for something from the past, looking for a rhyme, maybe something I had started and not finished. Coming up with the right words became a mystery. I kept looking and listening for the inspiration, trying to read my own mind. Along the way, there was a breakthrough and the song was finished.

I recall
Something you told me long ago
Look for the reason in the rhyme
Take your time
Something you may have left behind
Be sure to read between the lines

I am listening for you
It's getting harder to get through
There must be something we can do
To tame the mystery

Looking back
I took the long way 'round the track
Wondering if time is running out
Hard to say
On your own or on your way
Don't take fiction for the fact

I am reaching out to you
I'm hoping you are reaching too
There must be more that we can do
To tame the mystery

Answers are hard to find
When you've been flying blind
If I could read your mind
Well then, we'd tame the mystery!

Two-way street
I talk to you, you talk to me
This time we're playing for keeps
Second chance
An invitation to the dance
By now you know it's getting deep

I am waiting here for you
Could I have finally broken through
I'm doing all that I can do
To tame the mystery

That Changes Everything

Born in the age when criticism of almost everything runs rampant and is publicly discussed and debated online, these lyrics are a reminder that truth is the only thing that matters in the end. Arrogantly jumping to conclusions is dangerous and will often require us to acknowledge that we got it wrong. Eating crow and humble pie is tough medicine, and when truth comes out, well, that changes everything.

Heard what you heard
Saw what you saw
Know what you know
Win, lose, or draw
So certain, such confidence
So dug in, no sittin' on the fence

New information, the plot thickens
Recalibration, fear stricken
Could it be you got it wrong
Have to sing a different song
It's over now, you can't pretend
You know what you didn't then
And that changes everything

Two sides to every story
Two worlds, worlds apart
Can it be love and glory
So close, so far apart
Thought I'd live forever
But time has made it clear
Pay attention
No one's getting' out of here

New information, the plot thickens . . .

Perspective changed you
Don't you run away
It's rearranged you
Now you're here to stay
The party's over

Take your medicine
You'll see clearly
That changes everything

Who's wrong and who is right?
The tug of war persists
Could we just clear the air?
How did it come to this?
When all is said and done
More is said than done
And when the truth comes out
That changes everything

New information, the plot thickens . . .

Time For Bed

Everyone tries to write a lullaby and I was no different. I wrote this for Katie and Leslie when they were little. We used to sing it together. Katie later made me change the words from "don't you dare forget me when I'm dead and gone" in the third verse. Good call, Katie! Before we knew it, the circle had come 'round and they could sing it to their kids.

Time for bed my babies
Everything's alright
Sweet dreams upon your pillows
Will take you through the night

Off to be you go now
Growing up too fast
Day by day steals away
And too much time has passed

Don't you dare forget me
And though time must move along
Please remember the years so tender
And how we sang this song

Close your eyes
Good things in store for you
Sunny skies
Morning will bring to you

Please protect my babies
Keep them safe and sound
Until the time when they will find
The circle has come round, and they'll sing

Time for bed my babies . . .

Please take them through the night

Time Will Tell

We use this phrase a lot when we are uncertain about outcomes. We have opinions. We also have firmly held convictions, often religious, that we hope others will see our way. This song is about all of that. Be sure of this: We can say and believe anything we want, but in the the end time will tell.

I say it's coming
You're so carefree!
High stakes wager
Let's wait and see

Hide and watch
It's coming at you
I know there's water in the well
Ready or not
It will attract you
You can tell time
But in time
Time will tell

Doubts on the horizon
Hope carries the day
Eyes wide open
What can I say?

Maybe it turns out
Maybe it's free
Shouldn't be this hard to sell
No time to flame out
Listen to me

You can tell time . . .

Time never pauses
Time doesn't sleep
It has a way to run away
Doesn't come cheap

No surprises
When rings the bell
Cause in its own due time
Time will tell

Pendulums are swinging
Hourglasses run
Digits are shifting
Dial up the sun

Time has a way
Working through the maze
I know there's water in the well
Time has a way
Of clearing up the haze
You can tell time . . .

To The Light

In a certain way, this song is a sequel to my song "Knowing Somehow." But to be clear, the light is Jesus Christ. He is where you go–for everything. And while the words intimate that we do so when we are uncertain or in need, the truth is, as someone else once wrote, "We need thee every hour."

Tall order, anxious moments
Big decisions, mountains to climb
Expectations, under pressure
So much to do, so little time

Quiet moments
Ways to know
Things you can't touch or see
That's when you go
To the light

Coming or going, In or out?
Tired of swimming, rivers of doubt
Strong current, white water
Still spinning, turning about

Quiet moments . . .

Too close for comfort
Too close to call
Too hot to handle
Too far to fall

Are you coming or going?
Are you in or out?
Tired of swimming, rivers of doubt
Strong current, white water
Still spinning, turning about

Quiet moments . . .

Touch The Sky

This is one of my favorite songs I've written. I have long talked about how I love to look up at night. When I do, a sense of wonder comes over me. And while I can't comprehend it, it brings me a certain peace and a strong sense that there is a God, a purpose, and that it is all absolutely brilliant! As a side note, I wrote the intro chord structure when I was in high school but never had anything else to go with it until years later when I wrote the first two verses as poem called "Harvest Time."

Absolutely brilliant!

Silver sickle in the midnight sky
Take a swath across the universe
And harvest in this starry night
Harvest in this feeling

Store it up against my fears
Against my gray and dreary days
Against the cold and wintery nights inside of me
Harvest in this feeling of eternity

That's right
Absolutely brilliant!

Here we are on this little blue ball
Racing circles round the sun
Hard to fathom, not for me
All my wonder has begun

Absolutely brilliant!

Take a deep breath, can you feel it?
Take a good look, can you see?
Yesterday cries for replay
Tomorrow can't wait to be

That's right
Absolutely brilliant!

We lay on our backs, and stare into the night
It’s here you find answers to your how’s and you why’s
The sun has retired but the moon will drop by
Excuse me while I touch the sky

Absolutely brilliant!

Winter

I call this my tribute to Dan Fogelberg. I wish he could sing it. Sometimes, if I pause, I think I can actually hear him singing it in my head. Winter has it's place, but I'm only good with it until the end of December. Then I'm ready for what comes next! The lyrics for the bridge are a memory of waiting for the school bus in the dead of a Roosevelt winter.

When the first leaf falls to the ground
When the sky turns grey
When the green grass loses its luster
Winter is on its way

Turn up your collar, pull out the sweater
'Comes a colder day
Face to the fire, back to the wind
Winter is on its way

Bare trees, skeletons against the sky
Crystal flakes falling, earth slowly dies
Hearts hope for spring's silver ray
But there's no denying
The cold wind is sighing
Winter is on its way

Memories from long ago, far, far away
Waist-deep in snow to school
Uphill both ways
I can recall it hurting to breathe
And how the snow sounded
Under my feet

Bare trees, skeletons against the sky . . .

Really don't mind it, the change can be nice
But inside I pray
That it won't be long now, until it is clear
That sunlight will treat us
And warmer days greet us
And winter is on its way

Your Lives and Mine

I wrote this on a Sunday afternoon in the upstairs bedroom of our Murray home after it had been converted to a makeshift music room. It was the day after a high school reunion that had caused me to think about so many of the people I grew up with. As I thought about all the different directions our lives had taken, the words came quickly. In the end though, it was about where do we go from here?

Here on a summer Sunday
I can go back in time
On a train of memories
Your train and mine

I see a thousand pictures
We're in a million scenes
Beautiful hearts and faces
Filled with beautiful dreams

How did it all get past us?
When did it disappear?
Time carried all of days and our moments
And left them here

I like to think about us
Lost in a simpler time
Filled with our hope and wonder
Your hope and mine

Who could have seen our courses?
Where these paths would lead
Troubles, tears, and triumphs
Memories, indeed

How did it all get past us . . .

Sometimes I can sense it
The limit of my days
It sobers up my spirit
And softens my ways

But here on a summer Sunday
Back in the here and now
Future memories calling
All aboard now

Where will these new days take us?
What will become of our time?
All of our lives interwoven forever
Your lives and mine
Your lives and mine


drg
So Pretty A Sail


drg
Time Will Tell


drg
All Work and No Play


drg
Look What The Wind Blew In