Testimonies

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LouAnn Lee Turns Grief Into Worship on Holding My Heart

A true story of faith under pressure. Read the first half below, then continue online.

KEY SPIRITUAL TAKEAWAY

"Holding My Heart,"

(Transliterated from the original Hindi.)

They had gathered only to pray. When prayer itself becomes the target, faith is proved not by words but by staying.

The Story - Part One

Christian recording artist, pastor and worship leader LouAnn Lee has released "Holding My Heart," a 12-song worship album born from the hardest season of her life. Her husband, Cedric Ivan Lee, died on March 17, 2026. The album, announced on November 17 and subtitled "Songs of Praise for Every Season of Life," is the sound of what she did with the months that followed.

For seven months after her husband's passing, Lee spent her evenings in her upstairs recording studio, worshipping and writing songs.

She was not alone in the room. Beside her sat Bear, her little dog - an anniversary gift from her late husband. Night after night, the widow and the dog kept each other company while the songs came, one by one, out of the grief.

"It kept my mind from going into a very dark place and focused me on the presence of God," Lee says of those evenings. "As I worshiped God, He in turn held my heart in His nail-scarred hands, and these songs became my sacrifice of praise to Him. He heals me a little bit each time I sing them to Him." That is the whole album in three sentences: a woman who refused to let sorrow have the last word, and a God who met her in the singing.

Seven Months Of Evenings In The Studio

The nightly worship sessions were not planned as an album. Lee went upstairs because the house was quiet and the evenings were long, and she sang because singing was the only thing that kept the darkness at bay. The songs arrived the way grief arrives - slowly, and then all at once - and by the time autumn came, she had twelve of them.

She served as executive producer and produced the majority of the album herself, with Sal Oliveri producing "Hallelujah, Lion Of Judah" and the bonus Christmas song, "My Favorite Time Of Year." The recording features some of Nashville's finest studio musicians: guitarists Tom Hemby, Dave Cleveland and Ben Gowell, drummer Dan Needham, bassist Matt Pierson, keyboardist Jason Webb and saxophonist Tom Braxton. Background vocals came from Shelley Justice and Terry White. Instrumental tracking took place at Brownstone Recording in Brentwood, Tennessee, and the album was mixed and mastered by Jonathan Crone at The Noise Floor in Franklin, Tennessee.

The Turning Point - What Happens Next

The story reaches a life-changing moment that changes everything -- and what seemed like the end is only the middle. Two reports disagree on the numbers, and one question is left unanswered: will the CCTV footage ever come out? Read the full story to find out what happens next.

PERSONAL REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When gathering to pray carries a real cost, what keeps a community coming together anyway -- and what would keep you coming?

2. The pastor's sister shielded him with her own body and fainted under the blows. What does costly, self-giving love look like in your own family or church?

3. When justice is delayed and a complaint is withdrawn under threat, how do believers hold on to truth without giving in to fear -- or to hatred?

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