

# Student worship leader followed circuitous path to ministry

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Musician [James Curlin](#) followed a winding path to ministry.

“I grew up in a Christian home and was blessed to have parents that were very active in the church growing up,” Curlin said. “I gave my life to Christ at a young age, and also knew very early on that music was something that I enjoyed, and performing became a passion for me. I taught myself how to play the guitar when I was 13 years old and became really interested in writing songs that expressed my heart in my own words.”



James Curlin With hopes of establishing a career in the music business, the Arkansas native moved to New York and began working as a singer/songwriter. However, Curlin’s plans took a detour after meeting his future wife while visiting a friend in Waco.

After getting married and relocating to Waco so his wife could finish school at Baylor University, Curlin set his sights on ministry and served seven years as the youth and worship pastor at [Oak Grove Baptist Church in](#)

## [China Spring.](#)

During this time, Curlin also began leading worship for youth and college events around the state.

“While I was serving as a youth and worship pastor, we were leading a group to Mexico,” Curlin said. “My friend Brandon Baker, who played the drums, was on the trip, and we started talking about our shared passion for worship. When we got back to the States, he introduced me to a guitar player friend of his named Jarrod Glasby, and the three of us hit it off.

“We had a couple of people ask us to lead worship for their youth events, and everything just started happening from there. We never really made a specific decision to start a band. God just provided the opportunities and challenged us to trust him in the rest of the details. It still gives me chills to think about how God orchestrated and brought it all together. We’ve got a couple of new members now, and we’re still going strong.”



The James Curlin BandCurlin leads worship at [Fellowship of Montgomery](#) northwest of Houston and maintains a busy schedule leading worship with his band at student ministry events, including youth camps, retreats, conferences, DiscipleNow weekends and

worship services.

Curlin has led worship for the Baptist General Convention of Texas' Youth Evangelism Conference, Super Summer at East Texas Baptist University and Impact Youth Camp at LeTourneau University. His band also has led worship at ministry events in Spain and Ireland.

During his travels, Curlin enjoys interacting with people and hearing about what God is doing in their lives.

"We've had some really special moments recently leading worship," Curlin said. "Wherever we are playing, my prayer is always that God alone is glorified in our music. I want all that we say and do on the stage to point people to him and the goodness of his love and mercy.

"I think one of the most special things to me has been when someone shares how they've been encouraged or challenged by one of our songs. Songwriting is such an intimate process, and so much emotion goes into every word. When a person connects with the song in some way, that's an incredibly humbling experience.

"My favorite songs that I've written are the songs that have poured out onto paper or through the guitar in just a few minutes, because those songs are coming from a different place. To me, it's obviously the Holy Spirit when that happens. He's speaking something through me that needs to be shared, then I step back and look at the song when it's complete and think, 'Yeah, I'm definitely not good enough to come up with that line, lyric or melody by myself.'

"I love and cherish those moments, because it's God working through my weakness and shortcomings to glorify himself."