



NEWS RELEASE
Cowboy Church on RFDTV

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Luchsinger, Weaver bring Cowboy Church to Lazy E

Ministry that occurs during prestigious Timed Event Championship to be broadcast on RFDTV

GUTHRIE, Okla. – The message is as beautiful as the voice.

For 25 years, Susie McEntire Luchsinger has shared her faith in God through music, a natural reflection of her life, which has been surrounded by rhythm and rhyme. Her ministry has been witnessed by countless people, from large congregations to backyard gatherings to arenas all across this land.

It's the latter that led her to the specific gospel of Cowboy Church, whether it's at a horse show or a rodeo. That, too, comes naturally for Susie Luchsinger, a third-generation, ranch-raised cowgirl from southeastern Oklahoma.

"I've been helping with cowboy churches since 1984, when I found I could serve the Lord with my music," said Luchsinger, whose grandfather, John McEntire, won the steer-roping world championship in 1934. Her father, Clark McEntire, won two titles in the same event in 1957, '58 and '61. "My family has been involved in rodeo since the '20s and '30s, so this was just a natural place for me to go."

Now the Cowboy Church ministry can reach hundreds of thousands of people ... weekly. Luchsinger and calf-roper-turned-pastor Russ Weaver have taken their gospel to cable with shows airing on RFDTV. Cowboy Church, the ministry and the TV show, is coming to the Lazy E Arena near Guthrie for the Wrangler Timed Event Championship.

Cowboy Church – and the live taping of the program – will take place at 9:30 a.m. Sunday, March 8, at the arena, which is northeast of Oklahoma City and southeast of Guthrie.

"The Timed Event Championship is a very special part of my life," said Luchsinger, whose sister is Reba McEntire; their brother, Pake, also sings and ropes, having qualified for the National Finals Steer Roping multiple times. "We've had a Cowboy Church there for a while, (was a dream of competitor Jimmie Cooper) and it's grown and grown over time. I see people all over the country who come back to Oklahoma every year for the Timed Event. Some say it's the highlight of their weekend."

The Timed Event Championship of the World is known as the Ironman event in rodeo and features the top 20 all-around timed-event hands in the sport. This year marks the 25th year for this unique competition, which is a true test of versatility and stamina.

Weaver's roping career has carried him across the country, competing for prize money. Now the pastor of the Shepherd's Valley Cowboy Church in Egan, Texas, he takes time away from his church to minister nationwide.

"Russ actually has to monitor how much he leaves, but his church has been very supportive," Luchsinger said.

The show is just an extension of the church services and airs three times weekly – the initial show on Sunday, 4:30 pm CST, then re-runs Monday and Tuesday.

“Even though it’s a ‘show’; we try not to lose it’s effectiveness as it was done in the moment of the service,” Luchsinger said. “We have to do some things differently than a traditional service so we don’t lose any footage, but for the most part, it’s the same thing you’d see anywhere we go.”

Odle said the broadcast is the culmination of a dream he and Luchsinger have shared for about five years and it came to fruition two years ago. Since then, he said, they have seen countless blessings and witnessed tremendous testimony in God’s name just because of Cowboy Church’s message.

“I owned Superior Livestock Video Auction, which sold livestock on RFDTV for a number of years, and I sold the company in June of ’07,” Odle said. “That gave me some free time, and we got Cowboy Church launched in September 2007.

“With it, I think we’ve been able to reach some people who weren’t going to church or weren’t able to go to church. They were watching TV and needed to have a little faith in their lives.”

RFDTV is found through various cable outlets and satellite providers and is considered a network for rural America.

“Cowboy Church fits the rural America people,” Odle said. “There are people who had not been to church for whatever reason and had their lives affected by Cowboy Church. The music we have with Susie ... it also has a word to it and a testimony to it. The purpose of the show is to bring the word of the Lord to the people in the same round as they need it – it’s coming to them in their lifestyle.”

Even when the events aren’t televised nationally, cowboy churches have been an important aspect of the Western lifestyle for decades. In rodeo, cowboy church allows contestants to worship while traveling the rodeo trail. That’s something Luchsinger and Weaver know well.

Besides growing up around the sport, she’s seen the up-close-and-personal side of it since moving out on her own. Her three children, E.P., Lucchese and Samuel, have competed much of their lives, and the boys still compete professionally.

Weaver knows the rodeo road intimately. He roped calves professionally for 11 years and still likes to compete – when time allows, he still team ropes and ropes calves. He also knows how important it is to minister to those who try to make ends meet traveling from one rodeo to another.

“We like for people to share their flavor of the sport and the spiritual side of their walk with Christ,” Luchsinger said.

It’s that combination – the way the two share their walks with Christ – that makes Cowboy Church so special. The viewers have seen it. So has Jim Odle.

“Susie McEntire and Russ Weaver are two of the most heart-filled people you’ll ever get to meet,” Odle said. “They’re just down-home folks who have given their lives to God.”

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