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Oceola man sings his praise

Robin Gilshire i
in Genoa Towns
PRESS & ARGU

BY JIM TOTTON • DAILY PRESS & ARGUS • NOVEMBER 21, 2008

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He was raised in the Episcopal faith while growing up in Wisconsin and Ohio, but rebelled against the church as a teenager and college student.

ABOUT ROBIN

- **Age:**57
- **Residence:**C

Robin Gilshire admits to living a wild life when he attended Ohio State University, which he dropped out after three-and-a-half years without a degree. The Oceola Township man joked he was pretty good at making "industrial-strength mistakes" at that stage in his life.

Eventually, Gilshire turned things around and found himself back at church. How did it happen?

"I quit running from it," Gilshire said.

Not only did he return to attending church and singing in church choirs, Gilshire went back to school and completed a bachelor's degree in music. He then enrolled and obtained his master's of divinity and became an ordained minister with the United Methodist Church. He served 20 years in the Methodist church in the Detroit area.

Several years ago, while working as an appliance salesperson at The Home Depot store in Howell, Gilshire started attending services at Chilson Hills Church, a Baptist church in Genoa Township.

He's now an associate pastor and music director at Chilson Hills and still works full-time at The Home Depot. He said Chilson Hills is a neat place that attracts people from all walks of life who come under one roof to worship.

He enjoys leading his 22-person choir and creating a special blends of songs.

"I like finding faith in the everyday," he said.

Gilshire puts a unique twist on his music by combining popular songs with Bible stories. He said he's a "deplorable songwriter," but he has an ear for music. Remember Bill Joel's song, "Always A Woman to Me." Gilshire uses the tune and creates, "Sin's always an option to me." He also created a song using "Send in the Clowns," a song written by Stephen Sondheim's for "A Little Night Music" musical and James Taylor tunes.

He believes Christ was much very about finding messages in everyday things, and he tries to do the same.

Gilshire said it's amazing how the church took him back twice, and how his father endured his wild days as a teenager.

"I can tell you how to be a jerk — I had it down," Gilshire said.

He rebelled so much that "it's amazing that guy (my father) didn't shoot me," he said.

His father was an engineer and a concert flutist, and his mother excelled in several careers including radio personality, dancer and jazz trumpeter.

Gilshire recently had a chance to combine his two loves: Minister and singer. He conducted the ceremony for his son's wedding and sang at the ceremony.

He called it an "amazing experience."

Contact Daily Press & Argus reporter Jim Totten at (517) 548-7088 or at jtotten@gannett.com.

- **Occupation:** Chilson Hills Church time as appliance salesperson at The Home Depot store in Howell, Genoa Township

- **Favorite book:** Quest for the Holy Grail by T.H. Morgan

- **Hobbies:** Sports, reading

- **Family:** Married to a woman, father of four children.



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