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# Natalie Layne to make Buffalo debut at fall Kingdom Bound concert

*Layne to perform on bill with Tenth Avenue North*  
**BY JOSHUA MALONI**  
GM/Managing Editor

Natalie Layne is a musical prodigy and, because of that, it wouldn't be shocking if the 20-something Colorado singer and pianist was, well, a little full of herself.

Fortunately, a phone interview revealed Layne is as she comes across in her lyrics and videos: joyful.

At the age of 12, Layne was tapped to lead worship at and be guided by a Colorado church where Christian music power players preside. She went on to attend the prestigious Belmont University in Nashville, where she studied under Grammy Award-winning songwriter and producer Bernie Herms (Natalie Grant, Josh Groban, Barbra Streisand) through a semester-long apprenticeship, mastered in commercial piano, and won the Christian Showcase. Layne then signed a recording and publishing contract with Centricity Music, joining labelmates Lauren Daigle, Jason Gray, Jordan Feliz, Katy Nichole and Mack Brock.

It would be easy for Layne to point to herself and her accolades but, rather, she points upward and speaks of service to others.

Such an attitude is evident on the six-song EP "Amen," a collection in which Layne shares lyrics such as, "I'll take a look around/There's something to be grateful/Something to be grateful for/It's waiting to be found/Underneath the surface/Everything I'm searching for/Couldn't find it in me/But I found it in you/I'm learning to see/'Cause You're teaching me to/Take a look around/There's something to be grateful/Something to be grateful for" (from the song "Grateful For").

And, "Amen every day/I say amen to all the ways that/People are helping people/Making space at the table/I'm finding a little bit of that kindness/There's still good in the crazy world we're living in/To that I say amen" (from the song "Amen").

While the words are introspective and uplifting, the beats are bouncy and even danceable.

With her newest single, "Since I Found You," Layne is poised to live up to her placement on the 2024 Pandora "10 Artists to Watch" list. The jubilant tune fits just as well in a romantic comedy as it does in a Sunday service, espousing the "sun in my rain," the "light in my room," the "smile on my face" and the "flowers in June."

Layne will make her first appearance in the Buffalo area on Saturday, opening for Tenth Avenue North at Revive Wesleyan Church in Hamburg. The show is sponsored by Kingdom Bound Ministries.

Learn more about Layne in this edited Q&A.

**Q:** *I noticed in your bio that you started leading worship when you were 12 years old, which kind of floors me. At what point did someone realize that it wasn't just you were young and you liked to sing, and "Isn't that cute?" To, "Oh, she actually can sing – and maybe we should give her this platform?" What was that journey?*

**Natalie Layne:** Yeah, so, I started super young for me. My parents were both worship leaders, and so I was always around worship in the church. And so, I just remember, like growing up, going to these little worship rehearsals and stuff. I'd watch my mom sing and lead worship, and I would watch my dad play bass and everything. And so, our church leaders saw me as a little kid running around these little worship rehearsals.

And so, by the time I was 12 or so, they knew that I could play; they knew that I could kind of sing; and someone just believed in me enough to say, "Hey, could we have you start leading worship in the youth ministry?" And so, I started leading in kids, and then I



Natalie Layne will perform this weekend in Western New York. (Photo by Ashtin Paige // courtesy of Hoganson Media)

started leading in at youth group, and then I started leading in big church – and it was kind of a progression. But just had really amazing mentors and leaders who believed in me enough to give me a shot at all those things. They really stepped up to kind of be what the church should be, and mentored me all along the way.

So, I had people at my church who I didn't know that they had influence beyond just our church. I grew up at a church in Colorado Springs called New Life, and so my worship pastors were Cory Asbury and Jared Anderson and Jon Egan, and like these incredible songwriters who I didn't know their influence, but they just poured into me and were so kind to me over the years. So, it was a really sweet just kind of example of the church being the church from a young age, for me.

**Q:** *Based on the structure of your songs, the lyrics, the music, it seems certainly that, today, you enjoy your craft. You enjoy sharing this message with your audience, with your fans. But starting out at that young age, was it always something that you enjoyed and you saw yourself doing, or was that, too, sort of an evolution to get where you are now?*

**Natalie Layne:** Oh no, I loved it from the very beginning! I remember being like 3 or 4 years old and starting to play the piano; and my grandma was actually my first piano teacher; and I just loved it from the beginning. I always say it wasn't like I was learning the piano, it was like I was remembering how to play it; like it was just so innate and something that just came supernaturally to me.

And so, from the very beginning, I just remember that being the dream for me. I always thought, when I grew up, I would probably do something in music. And so, it's so cool to be here now and remember back to just being amazed by music and loving the piano and loving to sing from the beginning. And how, sometimes when God gives us those dreams, it's because they're his dreams for our lives, too. So, it's so cool to now be living that.

**Q:** *When they announced the Tenth Avenue North tour, there was a quote. (Frontman) Mike (Donehey) said that, with regard to adding you to the show, they were "blown away" by your "musical prowess and captivating personality." That's how they describe you. For people who are coming to see you for the first time, how would you describe you?*

**Natalie Layne:** (Laughs) That's funny. I love that question.

You know, we just like to have a good time with the songs that we're playing. There's a lot of joyful songs that I get to play on this tour. And, you know, I think we need songs of joy right now. It's like, there can be so much negativity – even in the songs that we write sometimes. So, I'm like, "I want to write songs of joy and sing songs of joy."

And so, it's a very joyful time. I just want there to be the joy of the Lord in the room. So, that's probably how I would describe it. It's a really sweet set.

And then the Tenth Avenue North guys are just unbelievable, and bring it every night. It's so fun to be on the road together.

**Q:** *Like you said, you started out with some pretty impressive pedigree around you, but, in recent years, you've had the opportunity to be out on the road with a lot of, I would say, heavy hitters within this industry. What have you learned about touring? What have you learned about interacting with the fans? What have you learned about being a performer?*

**Natalie Layne:** Yeah, they're amazing. I've been on a couple tours in the last year or so where I just get to learn from people who have been doing it for a long time – like the Tenth Avenue North guys have been doing this almost 25 years. Like, that's insane, and so rare for a band to get to do this that long. And so, whenever that's the case, I'm like, "Oh, they're doing something right, to be able to do this for that long."

And so, it's really cool to watch them on the road, and just how they take care of each other, and serve each other. And I think that that gets artists a really long way. Just learning from all these artists how they serve each other behind the scenes, and how they really pray through and think through and serve the audience that's coming to the shows, and it's just really sweet to learn from people whose hearts have stayed really genuine for that long.

**Q:** *Listening to your songs, it seems like they are more danceable, I guess, than a lot of songs within this genre. When you were plotting out the songs, how did you sort of see them meshing with Christian music, and just pop music, in general? How did you see yourself sort of fitting into the overall landscape in that regard?*

**Natalie Layne:** Yeah, you know, it's funny, because I don't think about that all that often, and I still don't really know where the sound is going to fit. I try to just make the songs that the Lord gives me, and trust that he's going to let them land where they should land. Because what I want to do, and what I have been writing, kind of crosses some genres in ways, you know?

I grew up on funk music and gospel and R&B/soul, and so, having some of those influences, and pop influences, as well, and then coming into the Christian genre, is kind of an interesting thing that sometimes people don't know what to do with.

But, yeah, I just try to make the music that the Lord gives me and trust that he's going to place it. But I mean, like I said, too, I think we need joyful songs right now, and so hoping that that message and that spirit comes through the music, either way, wherever they're placed, and however people find them.

So, it's cool; it'll be cool to see as time goes on.

Natalie Layne is online at <https://www.natalielayne.com/>.