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Brandon Heath Announces Debut Holiday Album, *Christmas Is Here*, October 15

Heath to Join tobyMac's 20-City "Hits Deep Tour" and Select "Brandisa" Dates This Fall

(Nashville, Tenn.) Sept. 16, 2013 — Emmy Award-winning, five-time GRAMMY nominee **Brandon Heath** will release his first holiday offering, *Christmas Is Here*, Oct. 15, 2013. Rich in musical diversity, *Christmas Is Here* takes listeners on a nostalgic journey through the most anticipated time of the year. "I want people to just hear a song and slip back into the past," Heath says. "Good Christmas music is really about sparking people's memories."

Heath has dreamed of creating a Christmas album for a long time and invited some friends to join him in the studio to make the process memorable. Sonja Isaacs, Ellie Holcomb and Matt Wertz all contributed background vocals, and Ben Shive (Andrew Peterson, Matt Wertz) produced the album, which was recorded in mid-July. Five hundred copies of *Christmas Is Here* will be available on vinyl, exclusively through www.BrandonHeath.net, giving fans the chance to experience Heath's preferred method of listening to holiday music.

The award-winning songwriter looked to some of his favorite Christmas albums for inspiration—recordings by Nat King Cole, Harry Connick, Jr., Patty Loveless and Kenny & Dolly—desiring to craft a timeless release fans would want to pull out year after year. Reflecting his influences, *Christmas Is Here* features three originals and seven classics, including traditional arrangements of "The Christmas Song," "O Come All Ye Faithful/Angels, We Have Heard on High," "Silent Night" and "The Bleak Midwinter," among others. The well-known Christmas songs showcase a spectrum of sounds ranging from big band to a cappella to bluegrass.

Two of the three new cuts reveal Heath's witty personality that has endeared the hit-making award winner to audiences. "The Day After Thanksgiving" pokes fun at the Christmas commercialism that sets in at the end of summer, leading most to completely overlook fall, one of Heath's favorite times of year. "Momma Wouldn't Lie to Me" is equally as lighthearted, with Heath putting his parents on the spot for the truth about Santa, mirroring a real-life conversation from his childhood. "Rest assured, no child-like beliefs will be harmed due to the listening of the song. No spoilers!" Heath proclaims.

In his trademark storyteller fashion, Heath highlights a lesser known character in the Christmas story on "Just A Girl"—the innkeeper who turned Mary and Joseph away. "I took a little creative license to tell what happened," he explains. Through the innkeeper's eyes, Mary is seen as an ordinary girl, but Heath notes the irony of the scene. "There's a story [about] when a non-believer asked a Catholic, 'Why is Mary so crucial to the Christmas story?' And the Catholic says, 'She's just a girl who said yes.' I think that says a lot for us," Heath offers. "God is often giving us opportunities we don't realize the significance of, but we just need to say yes. God can do things through ordinary people. Mary was just a girl, but she was also a catalyst in a huge event in the rest of history."

Fans can see Heath live on tobyMac's "Hits Deep" Tour beginning November 7 and running through mid-December. The tour will hit 20 cities this fall and also features Mandisa, Jamie Grace, Colton Dixon, Chris August and Capital Kings. Heath and Mandisa will also reunite for select dates this fall on their popular "Brandisa" tour.

To learn more about **Brandon Heath**, visit www.brandonheath.net, Twitter: @brandonheath and Facebook: Brandon Heath.

About Brandon Heath:

Since **Brandon Heath**'s debut on Reunion Records with *Don't Get Comfortable* (2006), he has become one of Christian music's most beloved and respected artists and songwriters.

Heath has garnered an Emmy Award, five GRAMMY nominations, an American Music Award nomination, honored as a five-time GMA Dove Award recipient, including Male Vocalist of the Year (2009 and 2010) and multiple songwriting

honors. His award-winning songs and signature vocals reflect a soaring radio career that includes top hit songs: “I’m Not Who I Was,” “Wait and See,” the 2009 GMA Dove Award-winning Song of the Year, “Give Me Your Eyes,” the eight-week chart topper, “Your Love,” “Jesus In Disguise,” “Love Does” and many others.

Heath, a Nashville native, first began writing at age 13. His artistry and ability to connect with audiences have compelled countless media outlets across the nation to platform his story and music. Highlights include *Billboard* magazine, “CBS Evening News with Katie Couric,” *Relevant* magazine, a 2011 feature by the *Wall Street Journal* and selection as a presenter during the 54th Annual GRAMMY Awards. Other key spotlights include Discovery Channel’s “On The Case With Paula Zahn,” which highlighted “Give Me Your Eyes” (*What If We* 8/19/2008), and a feature by The *New York Times* Sunday edition, touting Heath as a GRAMMY-nominated newcomer “that shouldn’t be allowed to slip through the cracks.” Heath releases his fifth studio album and first Christmas project, *Christmas Is Here* (Oct. 15, 2013), following recent album, *Blue Mountain* (Oct. 9, 2012).

For more information on **Brandon Heath** and *Christmas Is Here*, please visit www.BrandonHeath.net, [www.Facebook.com/BrandonHeathOfficial](https://www.facebook.com/BrandonHeathOfficial) or [www.Twitter.com/BrandonHeath](https://www.twitter.com/BrandonHeath).

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