

## Justin Russell



Justin Russell has been in the square dance activity since 2000. He took lessons with his grandmother, mom, dad, and brother and finished learning the mainstream program in 2001. Friends from church got him to come to that first beginner dance, but no one knew it would become his passion. In June 2003, Justin attended his first Caller School in Tyler, TX with Jon & Deborah Carroll-Jones, Vernon Jones, and Jerry Story.

Justin has attended eight National Square Dance Conventions (NSDC) and three CALLERLAB Conventions. Justin currently calls for Top Spinners in Eads, Pistols & Petticoats in Bartlett, and Grand Squares - Memphis, a beginner club in Memphis. He travels during the summer calling both Modern Square Dances as well as Beginner (Party Night) Dances. Justin is passionate about teaching new dancers about this wonderful activity!

Currently, Justin is the Chairman of the Youth Committee for CALLERLAB with a focus on training other young dancers to pick up the microphone. Because he offers a different, younger perspective, Justin has served on several panels and roundtables at the NSDC and CALLERLAB Conventions.

In 2006, Justin spent the summer in Denver, CO calling for the Colorado Rocky Mountain Dancers, an exhibition group representing the Lloyd Shaw era of dancing. During this time, Justin learned the valued history and tradition of this activity. He stills performs with the group when possible.

In 2008, Tony Oxendine and Jerry Story asked him to record for Royal Records. In October 2008, Justin went to Oak Valley Studio in Nashville to record "Free Ride" with the award winning engineer Kevin McManus. His first singing call was nominated for the Bob Osgood "Singing Call of the Year" Award in 2011. In 2010, "Only You" was released followed by "Memphis, TN" in 2011. Justin has also recorded at The Grove at Hope Presbyterian Church in Memphis.

Justin's goal is to blend the tradition of square dancing with the twenty-first century. He graduated from the University of Memphis in May 2011 with a degree in political science with a minor in Sociology.