

Born in Kansas, raised in Southern California, Joan Nelson moved back to the heartland at age 40 and has never looked back. Being surrounded by music - sing harmonies by listening to her dad and uncle, teaching herself to play her brother's guitar - put her on a path to a life with music. Her first band was at age 10 and since then, there has been a steady progression of performing groups, including local bands "Sonic Wood" and "The Lovehandles."

Her professional life has taken unusual directions. In college, she led fitness classes at the Braille Institute, and taught downhill skiing to the blind and amputees. After graduation, she turned tennis pro for a private club, concierge for a major hotel chain, marketing director for a ski resort, mountain operations in ski resort management. She even did a stint in group sales for an NBA team.

As a part time church secretary at her Presbyterian church in Manhattan, Kansas, she discovered two other "church ladies" and began exploring a variety of harmony based, acoustic music. And her next band was born - THE CHURCH LADIES.