

First Christian Unity Service Friday

By KYLIE SHAFFERKOEETTER
Post Staff

BACK MOUNTAIN - One simple idea is bringing local Christians together. The first ever Christian Unity Service sponsored by the Back Mountain Ministerium through the Wyoming Valley Council of Churches will be held Friday at the Back Mountain Harvest Assembly Church at 7 p.m.

Many area youth groups are participating in the energetic and creative one-hour ecumenical service. Approximately 100 youths and adult advisors will prove their scheduling skills by cramming in 60 minutes worth of comical and dramatic skits, with prayers and songs, including a version of the Lord's Prayer sung along with sign language. The service will also focus on hunger awareness, with many of the groups participating in a 30-hour fast beginning Friday as part of the World Vision program.

Susan Harper of Dallas came up with the idea based on the grassroots ecumenical Taize services most recently held at the Huntsville Christian Church. "I thought it would be a good idea for the youth. The Back Mountain Ministerium pulled it together with the youth groups," explained Harper, who works for the Wyoming Valley Council of Churches.

Although the service is not in the Taize format, Harper said the energy and spirit is definitely there. The youth groups and advisors have met to plan and practice five times before the big night. Stan Oschman, youth director for Dallas Baptist Church, said a program like this truly promotes unity among Christians and that it is in Scripture for Christians of different backgrounds work together harmoniously.

"As a Christian church we don't need to be fighting. We need to work together. This service creates a stronger bond intertwined with other Christians. Just because we worship differently does not mean we don't believe in the same things. Christ is our Lord," said Oschman, who has found it interesting to learn what other youth groups are doing. "We are all getting to express the way we do things. It's really opening up the kids' eyes. They are realizing they aren't the only Christians around."

Meredith Nagy, 15, the daughter of Rev. Robert Nagy of Prince of Peace Episcopal Church, thinks preparing for the service has been educational. "It's been interesting. We get to see what all the other Christian religions are like and

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Stan Oschman
Youth director, Dallas United Methodist Church

how they combine together," said the Dallas High School student. "I've gotten to know other people from school who are Christian."

Meredith will participate in all three categories of the service and said that although there is a lot of youth participation, the grown-ups did most of the planning. Her 13-year-old sister Emily said she has met many new friends who also attend Dallas, which is especially nice since the family just recently moved to the area.

Rev. Nagy is happy to not only work with the 12 people participating from his youth group, but with all the kids. He would like to see the groups participate in activities on a regular basis. "I'm hoping this will be a launching pad for more youth events, where we work toward sharing schedules and making sure everyone knows everyone is invited. We are trying not to compete with each other by knowing each others' schedules," said Nagy.

Bethany Brown and her sister, Katja, attend the Harvest Assembly, and will be involved in the groundbreaking service. Bethany stresses that it is not just about youth. "It's been very cooperative and a collection of everyone's ideas, not just one church or one person's," explained Bethany, 16, also a Dallas High School student.

Because it is for everyone, the service practices have brought Christian teenagers together and Bethany believes it is important for them to get together and minister to one another. "It's good for teenagers to be amongst each other," she said.

Pastor Rob Coscia of the BMT Harvest Assembly Church said he has never seen this kind of hunger in people to work



Rehearsing for Friday's service, above, from left; Kerry Malone, Jeff Pimm, Wendy Stradele, Jackie Demming. Drumming up some spirit, right photo, Richard Blaine, seated, and Michael Nixon.

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Bethany Brown
Dallas

together. "This definitely says 'I am not alone'," he said of the collaboration. "My kids are strong in their faith and when they see other kids who share that there is a sense of togetherness, purpose and oneness. We have more in common than not in common. I'm very excited about the future back here."

The churches involved are St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Trinity Presbyterian Church, St. Therese's Catholic Church, Gate of Heaven Catholic Church, Back Mountain Harvest Assembly, Trucksville United Methodist Church, Dallas Baptist Church, Prince of Peace Episcopal Church, and others.



Rosetti art show opens Sunday

The public is invited to the Opening Reception of the 18th Annual Suzanne Maria Rossetti Memorial Juried Art Show on Sun., Feb. 28, from 1-4 p.m. at the MacDonald Art Gallery, College Misericordia, Dallas. An awards ceremony will follow at 4 p.m.

Over 900 entries were judged separately on each grade level in a variety of categories including, pencil, pastel, watercolor, acrylic, oil, ink, scratchboard, mixed media, fibers, photography, prints, and miniature drawings and paintings.

Each student may submit a total of three entries. Of this year's entries, 320 were accepted to be on display at the MacDonald Art Gallery at College Misericordia.

Ribbons were awarded in 12 different categories on each separate grade level by two panels of three judges each. In addition, \$2,000 in community sponsored awards have been awarded by a separate awards jury.

The exhibit of winning art works will continue through Sun., March 31. Gallery hours are as follows: Tues., Wed., Thurs., 12-5 p.m. and 6-8 p.m.; Fri., 12-5 p.m.; Sat. and Sun., 1-5 p.m.; the gallery is closed Mondays.

The Suzanne Maria Rossetti Memorial Juried Art Contest is sponsored by Joe and Sue Hand of Dallas in memory of the daughter of Louise and the late Peter Rossetti of Saugus, MA.

The contest is open to any 7th through 12th grade student who resides in, or attends any public, private, or parochial school within the school districts of Dallas, Lehman, Tunkhannock or Northwest, or any 7th-12th grade student who resides in Dallas, Lehman, Tunkhannock, or Northwest, or any 7th-12th grade students who study art with any private instructor teaching within those areas.

Lake-Lehman board to meet March 2

The regular monthly meeting Committee-of-the-Whole meeting of the Lake-Lehman School board will be held on Tuesday, March 2, at 7 p.m. in the music room of the Lehman-Jackson Elementary School.

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