

Celebration of Faith and the Arts, benefit for Safe Harbor, was standing room only on March 4

Submitted by

Susan Lydick Greene

"Now I know what heaven is like," marveled Pastor Kate Crecelius of Unity Lutheran Church in Hickory. Sunday, March 4, saw Unity and Mt. Pisgah Lutheran Churches partnering to host a benefit for Safe Harbor ministries with a standing-room-only performance by Lenoir-Rhyne's A Cappella Choir, directed by Dr. Ryan Luhrs and Lenoir-Rhyne's Brass Ensemble, directed by D. Christopher Nigrelli.

So many hands from different organizations in the Bethlehem/Hickory communities combined their skills, talents, and resources, to make this event the success that it was. Pastor Mike, as he is fondly known by the Mt. Pisgah Lutheran church family, stated, "It was a beautiful partnership between two churches and both music and arts combined with a meaningful outreach mission to Safe Harbor Ministries. It was all I had envisioned in every way."

Susan Lydick Greene, a spokesperson for Mt. Pisgah explained, "I watched tears rolling down faces in the audience as the choir sang "Lord, God, You Have Called Your Servants" (by J. Aaron McDermid) and "Here I Am, Lord" (by Daniel L. Schutte). It truly sounded as if the angels in heaven had come to serenade us personally. The talent involved blended with the acoustics of the church to create a performance of the purest sound."

Mt. Pisgah and Unity Lutheran Churches, joined together in cooperation with Lenoir-Rhyne University, to celebrate the joy found in sharing the gifts of music, art, and the

testimony of a life journey, with a program to benefit Outreach Ministry, Safe Harbor. The public was invited to attend the 3:00 program and by 2:45 additional seating was being put into place in order to accommodate the larger than expected crowd of approximately 300.

Prior to the concert, Pastor Kate had declared, "This event celebrates God's work in the world through the arts," states Pastor Kate Crecelius, of Unity Lutheran. "We're incredibly grateful and excited to host LRU's Music and Art departments to promote awareness of, and support, the work and mission of Safe Harbor. This concert is the result of many people coming together from across the city, and is the vision of Pastor Mike Stone, of Mt. Pisgah Lutheran Church, who reached out to us. We all belong to each other, and we can make the world a more beautiful place, only when we work together."

Dr. Chris Nigrelli added, "It was inspiring for our students to perform for such a large and enthusiastic audience. And, to lend our talents towards supporting such a worthy and important cause as Safe Harbor Ministries is very rewarding. I am grateful to Pastors Stone and Crecelius for their leadership in bringing these series of programs to fruition."

Coupled with the musical performance, student artists from Lenoir-Rhyne's Visual Arts Program, under the direction of Claire L. Pope, MFA, Assistant Professor and Program Coordinator, Fine Arts, presented artwork created with messages of hope, which was



AT MARCH 4 BENEFIT CONCERT — Above, Dr. Ryan Luhrs conducts LRU's A Cappella Choir at Unity Lutheran Church on March 4, 2018.

displayed at a reception following the performance.

Exceeding projections, nearly \$3,000 dollars was raised for Safe Harbor through a free-will offering. Safe Harbor ministries exist to create a Christ-centered community where women can work to rebuild their lives—devastated through situations caused by poverty, homelessness and/or addiction—through immediate and long term programs.

Safe Harbor receives a substantial part of their funding from churches, businesses, individuals, and events like this. For more information on Safe Harbor, visit <http://www.safeharborrescuemission.org>. Emotions were riding high at the conclusion of the performances, which finished with an extended standing ovation. Surprising everyone, an unknown guest extended the performance by shouting from the seats, "Today has been a day of grace! Can you sing it?" As the choir nodded the affirmative, they added one additional song "O Day Full of Grace," (arr. F. Melius Christiansen) and the concert ended with another standing ovation. A day of Grace indeed.

The next event in this series will be held October 21st. For more information about Unity Evangelical Lutheran Church, please call Unity Lutheran Church at 828.324.1533 or visit www.unitylutheran.net.

The Mt. Pisgah Lutheran Church family warmly welcomes all. For directions and further information, please call the church at 828.495.8251; visit www.mtpisgahelca.org or the Facebook page at Mt. Pisgah Lutheran Church, ELCA.

ACHS Men's Tennis Team downs North Lincoln, climbs to 3-0 this season

By D.N. PENNELL, Jr.

The Alexander Central Men's Tennis Team won its third straight match to open the season in a 6-3 victory over the North Lincoln Knights on Tuesday afternoon, March 13, in Pumpkin Center.

The Cougars posted a 4-2 singles performance and a 2-1 doubles effort en route to the team's third straight victory.

Carter Patterson, Jackson Barr, Chandler Davis, and Caleb Bolick won their respective singles contests to remain unbeaten this season at 3-0. Patterson and Barr won easily, 8-0 and 8-1 respectively.

On court three, Chandler Davis recorded an 8-5 win.

The most competitive singles match came on court five where Caleb Bolick rallied from behind for his third win of the season. Bolick trailed 6-3 at one point in the match before coming back to win 9-7.

In doubles action, Patterson and Cameron White combined for an 8-2 win on court one, while Barr and Chandler Davis won 8-5 on court two to improve to 3-0 on the year.

The Cougars will travel to St. Stephens for a non-conference match with the Indians on Thursday, March 15, at 4 pm.

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ACC Barnstorming Tour lineup announced

On Thursday, March 8, ACC legend Phil Ford and Pet Sumner of the Summer Group held a press conference at Alexander Central High School to announce details about the ACC Barnstorming Tour, which is coming to Taylorsville on Thursday, April 12, at 7:30 pm.

During the conference, the tentative roster for the 2018 ACC team was announced. The list includes Grayson Allen of Duke University and Joel Berry, II, and Theo Pinson of North Carolina.

Allen was a member of the 2015 Duke University National Championship Team as a freshman. This year, Allen was a third-team All-ACC honoree.

Berry and Pinson have been leaders for North Carolina since arriving on campus in 2014. The duo played key roles in last season's NCAA Championship for the Tarheels. Berry, who was named the MVP of the Final Four last April, is a first team All-ACC performer this year, while Pinson earned Honorable Mention honors.

In addition, Abdul-Malik Abu, Lennard Freeman, and Al Freeman of NC State, and Aaron Rohlman of UNC will be part of the game in April. Seniors from Wake Forest are slated to fill out the ACC roster, which will be coached by Phil Ford.

General Admission tickets for the game are only \$12 presale and \$15 at the door. VIP tickets are sold out.

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line at www.carolinabarnstorming.com or at local ticket outlets. Locally general admission tickets can be purchased at Alexander Central High School, West Alexander Middle School, East Alexander Middle School, PJ's Seafood & Steak in Bethlehem, and The Taylorsville Times ofice in downtown Taylorsville.

Doors will open at 6:00 pm and the game will tip off at 7:30 pm.

The ACC Stars will be facing off against a local all-star team made up of seniors from the NW 3A/4A Conference. The NWC team includes players from Alexander Central, Hickory High School, South Caldwell, West Caldwell, and St. Stephens.

The area team will be coached by ACC Coach Ed Wills. He will be assisted by St. Stephens Coach Murphy Post and ACC Assistant Coach Cam Gant.

For the past 39 years, The Sumner Group has sponsored and coordinated the ACC Barnstorming Tour.

This marks the 40th year, the Tour has provided a rare up-close-and-personal look at such standout players as Michael Jordan, Len Bias, Dereck Whittenburg, Tyler Hansbrough, Nolan Smith, and Tyler Zeller to fans of all ages across the southeastern United States.

This season promises to be another exciting year in Barnstorming history. In addition to the basketball games, each stop will also consist of a 3-point contest

and a dunk contest. Players will be available following the game for a limited autograph session with general admission ticketholders.

VIP ticketholders will enjoy reserved front row seating to the game, a post game reception with the ACC All-Stars, and a photo/autograph session.

A portion of the proceeds from each game will be donated to the Ronald McDonald House. Additional proceeds will also benefit the Alexander Central High School Cougar Club.

Farm Bureau Insurance in Taylorsville is the Corporate Sponsor for this year's ACC event in Alexander County.

Psychological Solutions of Lake Norman and Solutions of Hickory are serving as the Associate Sponsors for the ACC event.

NWC ALL-STARS
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