



LORI DUFF/Missourian

Rock Bridge sophomores (from left) Ani Zapata, Erin McAllister and Hailey Wulff sing during See You At the Pole.

Gathering at the POLE

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With heads bowed and hands linked, Columbia students joined students from around the nation at the flagpole Wednesday morning. Students met for See You at the Pole, an annual morning prayer service, at schools nationwide.

At Rock Bridge High School, the Fellowship of Christian Athletes organized the event.

"Look around you," Kate Germain, a senior FCA member said to the group. "These people are the backbone of Rock Bridge."

See You at the Pole started in 1990, when a small group of students in Burleson, Texas, met to pray for local leaders and their school.

This year, the flags they gathered around were flying at half-staff.

At Rock Bridge, students played guitar during the time of worship and prayer. As they joined the nation in prayer, students hoped others entering the building would be curious about the event.

Justin Wright, a senior, said he hoped people would ask what they were doing so he could share his faith.

Across town, students at Hickman High School also woke early to pray on campus. They noticed an increase in attendance this year and attributed it to last week's terrorist attacks.

Students prayed for teachers and fellow students but also prayed for victims and their families.

Sophomore Eric Stewart said it is an important event for schools and teens.

"People come and need help and learn by Christ and have models here to get that with," Eric said.

This year also featured students playing music and more personal prayer.

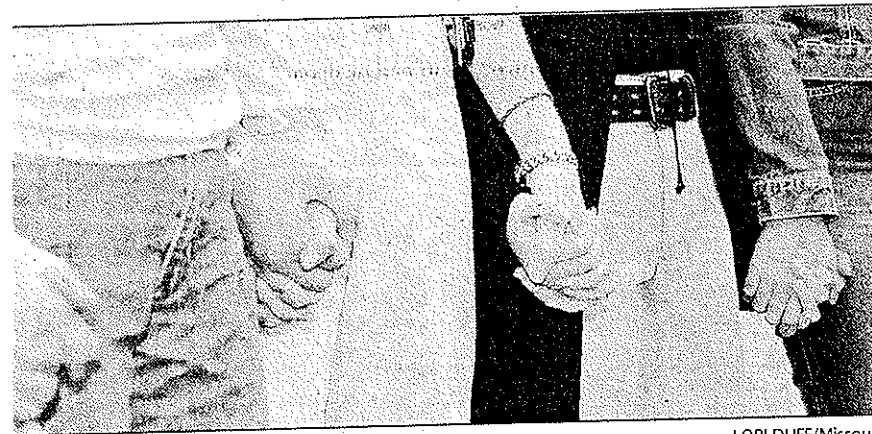
"This is the first year I've been to one with music. Last year, a lot of people didn't pray, but almost everyone did this time," Eric said.

Most students were excited about the large turnout of about 75 students. Others noticed the excitement of the event even before the service began at 7 a.m.

"I was going to put up fliers, but someone already did," said Kristen Schofield, a senior leader of the event.

On the MU campus, about 35 people gathered on the steps of Jesse Hall for prayer and worship. At 7 a.m., the group moved to the grass in front of the building to look up at the flags as the Star Spangled Banner played. Then they returned to the steps to sing songs of praise.

At Columbia College, the gathering was much smaller. Two students held hands around the flagpole as they prayed for guidance after last week's events.



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Rock Bridge High School students hold hands Wednesday as they gathered around school's flagpole for a nationwide student-sponsored prayer meeting.

“
These people are the backbone of Rock Bridge.”

KATE GERMAIN

Rock Bridge senior, speaking at See You at the Pole