

## FEATURE

## Christian band to rock Elmira high school Nov. 15

By Mike Latona  
Staff writer

ELMIRA — *The weight of the world is not on my shoulders.*

*It's carried by the one I love.*

Lance Nielsen, who penned these lines, knows a lot about the weight of the world and the importance of love.

When he was 16, Nielsen was going down a rough road. A product of a broken home affected by alcohol abuse, Nielsen had begun to dabble in witchcraft and Satanism.

That all changed, he said, when he was brought to an overnight youth lock-in at a Catholic church.

"A friend of mine knew I was going commit suicide," Nielsen said in a telephone interview.

"I walked in and I just had a radical, radical conversion with the Holy Spirit. I knew that what I felt, at the time, was pure love."

More than a decade later, Nielsen is still on fire from his experience. He conveys his message of loving Christ through the Christian rock band he founded, Angel Hill.

The group, based out of Boulder, Colo., will appear at Elmira Notre Dame High School Monday, Nov. 15, for a 7 p.m. concert. It will mark the two-year-old band's debut appearance in the Rochester Diocese.

Karen Kilpatrick said that she and the Notre Dame Parents Committee sought out Angel Hill after she saw them appear on the Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN) program "Life On the Rock."

"It's something we need to make available to teens," said Kilpatrick, a member of St. Casimir Church, whose son Cory attends Elmira Notre Dame. "The kids are listening to so much garbage, and it's anti-Christian, even if they don't realize it."

Jill Williams, ND's senior class vice-pres-



Provided photo

Angel Hill members, from left to right: John Fitch, Lance Nielsen and Mike Binder.

ident, has helped promote the concert in school. After listening to Angel Hill, she realizes that Christian rock is much different from church hymns, even though the message is the same, she said.

"I like it. It just sends a positive message," said Jill, 17, a parishioner at Our Lady of Lourdes Church.

Angel Hill's style, according to Nielsen, covers "pop, grunge, alternative and reggae." Nielsen, 27, serves as lead vocalist and guitarist. The other two core members are guitarist Mike Binder, 20, and drummer John Fitch, 19.

Nielsen noted that Angel Hill's self-titled debut CD has been picked up for distribution by HeartBeat Records, an Iowa-based company featuring Catholic artists. The CD is also sold at their concerts.

Nielsen said Angel Hill's two appearances on EWTN have helped boost the

band's air play on Christian-rock radio stations around the country. Angel Hill often draws concert crowds of at least 3,000, he said, and has played for as many as 12,000. Angel Hill is currently working on a second album, to be titled "Pillars of Fire."

## Rochester parish choir releases hour-long recording

Most Precious Blood Church Choir of Rochester recently recorded "How Sweet the Sound," with Dynamic Studios. The one-hour CD includes such favorites as "Panis Angelicus," "On This Day O Beautiful Mother" and "Tu Scendi Dalle Stelle"; "O Holy Night," "The Holy City" and "Alleluia Sing to Jesus"; and the traditional "Let There Be Peace on Earth" and "Ave Maria," which is sung by Choir Director Marisa De-

Mario.

The choir's 15 members range in age from 16 to 83. On the CD they are frequently accompanied by flute and sometimes by trumpet. The church expects tapes for \$10 and CDs for \$15 to be available at the church before and after weekend Masses beginning Nov. 20. They also may be purchased by calling choir member Mary DiPonzio at 716/254-6706.

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