

Christians Sing 'How Great Thou Art' Despite Federal Court Order

There was no halftime show under the Friday night lights at Mississippi's Brandon High School—the marching band had been benched.

The band was ordered off the field because the Christian hymn "How Great Thou Art" was a part of their halftime show—in violation of a federal court order.

"The Rankin County School Board and District Office are very saddened students will not be able to perform their halftime show they have worked so hard on this summer," the district wrote in a statement to the *Clarion Ledger* newspaper.

In 2013, a student sued the district over a series of Christian meetings that had been held on school property, the newspaper reported. The district later settled the lawsuit and acknowledged they had violated the student's First Amendment rights.

In July, U.S. District Court Judge Carlton Reeves ruled the district had violated the agreement after a Christian minister delivered a prayer at an awards ceremony.

Judge Reeves, who was appointed to the bench by President Obama, came down hard on the school district—ordering them to pay thousands of dollars in fines. He also warned the district that future violations would cost them \$10,000.

"Defendants are permanently enjoined from including prayer, religious sermons or activities in any school-sponsored event including but not limited to assemblies, graduations, award ceremonies, athletic events and any other school event," the

order reads.

Word about the band getting benched spread across the town quicker than kudzu. I must have received emails and Facebook messages from nearly the entire state—from Desoto County to Yazoo City.

Something must be done to right this wrong, people said. A message had to be sent to the likes of Judge Reeves. Locals gathered in coffee shops and garages to devise their plan.

And what they did—would become known as the musical shot heard around the world.

During halftime of Friday night's game—a lone voice began to sing the forbidden song.

"Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee," the singer sang.

Brittany Mann was there and she witnessed the entire moment of defiance.

"We were just sitting there and then one by one people started to stand," she told me. "At first, it started out as a hum but the sound got louder and louder."

She said it was a "truly incredible" moment to watch hundreds of people singing together in the stadium.

"At that moment I was so proud of my town—coming together and taking a stand for something we believe in," she said. "It breaks my heart to see where our country is going—getting farther and farther away from the Christian beliefs that our country was founded on."

I suspect Miss Brittany wasn't the only one who felt a sense of pride in the Magnolia State on that warm summer night.

"We may be pictured as toothless, barefoot, uneducated people around the country, but we are far from it," nearby resident

Mandy Miller told me. "I'm from Mississippi and I'm not ashamed to take a stand."

Oh what a sight it must have been—as hundreds and hundreds of people stood together and with one voice—sent a message to Judge Reeves.

"This is the kind of thing that makes me proud to be from the South," Miss Mandy told me. "We are getting tired of being told to sit down and shut up. People are ready to fight back."

Miss Mandy is absolutely right. The time has come to stand up to the secularists.

The time has come to put an end to their cultural jihad.

I hope the Rankin County School Board will reconsider its decision and allow the marching band to resume performing "How Great Thou Art."

And should Judge Reeves make good on his threat to financially punish the school district, I will personally pay the \$10,000 fine.

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