Thank You, York, for Inspiring and Unit ing Our Community!

Springfield Unity Festival
We Raise Our Voices
October 18, 2014 • Springfield Symphony Hall

The Springfield Unity Festival
A Unique and Inspiring Concert

October 18, 2014 • 7:30 p.m.
Springfield Symphony Hall

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www.springfield.unityfestival.com
Welcome to the inaugural Springfield Unity Festival choral concert! We are thrilled to have worked with an excellent and dedicated team of volunteers to make our dream of promoting unity and celebrating diversity through music a reality.

This project, and the numerous other volunteer experiences we have had in the greater Springfield region, has required us to engage with people from all races, backgrounds, religions, orientations and abilities. These interactions have made our lives so much richer, fuller, interesting and full of inspiration that we have come to believe that diversity is a strength to celebrate, not a weakness to avoid. The diversity in the Pioneer Valley, and our country, contributes to the richness of our community and makes us stronger in a way that nothing else can.

Why do we so often fail to take full advantage of this strength? More often than not, members of our community stick to their own race, their own places of worship, and their own neighborhoods. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could find ways not only to acknowledge other cultures and heritages, but to step outside of our comfort zone and truly embrace and understand them? The idea of finding ways to interact with people with whom we normally do not interact was the genesis of the Springfield Unity Festival concept. It is our hope that bringing diverse people together, joyfully in song, we will help build understanding, compassion, and love among all people.

Enjoy the concert and celebrate our strength!

York Mayo and Lee Hagon
Co-Founders, Springfield Unity Festival

Rev. Raymond Wise

Rev. Raymond Wise, Ph. D., a native of Baltimore, Md., began his musical career at the age of three, singing gospel music with his family singing group "The Wise Singers." Rev. Wise attended Denison University (Granville, Ohio) where he was active in musical groups and earned a B.F.A. in Music. Wise was awarded a Graduate Fellowship from Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio where he earned his Masters and Doctorate in Music Education.

Dr. Wise has served as a church minister of music for more than 30 years. He has served as the musical director for more than 30 choirs and appeared with national recording artists such as Kenny Rogers, Diana Ross, Yolanda Adams, Tramaine Hawkins, Wintley Phipps, and others.

As a composer Wise has penned more than 600 compositions that have been performed and recorded by local, national, and international recording artists. Rev. Wise has served as a church musician for more than 30 years and has appeared on radio and television, recorded 20 albums, performed with several opera singers, orchestras, dance companies, professional recording groups, and has toured extensively throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, and Asia as a singer, dancer, pianist, composer, choral director, lecturer, and teacher.

Dr. Wise is presently collaborating with Rutgers University and other colleges across the country to establish an accredited online certificate program in African American Gospel and Sacred music. He currently serves on the faculty of Indiana University and works in the African American Arts Institute, a division devoted to the perpetuation and performance of African American music and art. Dr. Wise serves as the Director of the African American Choral Ensemble and instructs courses in African American music.
Unity Festival Program

Masters of Ceremonies, WFCR Hosts, Kari Njiiri and Raquel Obregon

Unity Festival Chorus under the direction of Dr. Raymond Wise.
Selections to be announced.

The Festival Chorus is a group of volunteer singers from the greater Springfield region. The group represents a diverse cross-section of our community who came together for the first time this morning to learn gospel music, and learn about each other, through rehearsal, through fellowship and performance.

Dr. Raymond Wise, director
Geoffrey Cunningham, trumpet
Kendra Emery, tenor saxophone
Harry Hunt, bass
Mark Lomax, drums

David Powell, piano
Marlon Webb, keyboard
Josh Wolfe, trombone

Surah Al-Fatiha*.................. Wissam Abdul Baki, Imam of the Islamic Society of Western Massachusetts

*Surah Al-Fatiha (The Opening) is the first chapter of the Quran. Its verses are a prayer for God’s guidance.

"Una Voz" Chorus
The "Una Voz", or "One Voice", choir is a group of select singers from the Pioneer Valley representing the beauty, talent and strength of our diverse community. Under the direction of local conductors, "Una Voz" rehearsed for several weeks to share uplifting and positive music of various cultures and traditions.

Penny Brandt, piano
Sayun Chang, percussion
Reginald "Jay" Adams, Jr., conductor

Raymond Drury, conductor
Lee Hagon, conductor
Rafael Osorio, conductor

David Maddux, Marty McCall,
Ray Drury, director
Mmunga Mwenebulongo
Mulongoy, Asukulu Yunu Makalay
arr. Roger Emerson

AI Shlosha D’Varim........................................... Allan E. Naplan
Jay Adams, director

Stand By Me............................. Charles Albert Tindley, arr. Moses Hogan
Lee Hagon, director

Durme, Durme............................ Sephardic Folk Song, arr. Audrey Snyder
Ray Drury, director

I Need You To Survive............................. David Frazier
Jay Adams, director

Hine Ma Tov..................................... Hebrew Folk Song, arr. Neil Ginsberg
Rafael Osorio, director

It Takes a Village.............................. Joan Szymko
Lee Hagon, director

The Springfield Unity Festival Chorus
Selections to be announced

Finale
We Raise Our Voices*............................. Dr. Raymond Wise

*Please join in this selection.
You can find the words on the following page.

Thank you for attending the Springfield Unity Festival!
Join the conversation with #SpringfieldUnity!
We Raise Our Voices: Raymond Wise
Commissioned by the 2014 Springfield Unity Festival

VERSE I
I can just imagine
A glorious symphony of song
That's performed by all the people who
Have the courage to sing along
As each one sings their story
Their different notes form into chords
When the chords ring out
There'll be no doubt
Our blended voices make one song

And spread harmony throughout the land
U-N-I ted together
Can raise a joyful song
So let's raise our voices together
In life, in love, in song

VERSE II
Won't you come and join us
Come bring your story, your dreams, your song
No more hurt and tears, mistrust and fears
It's time to heal and get along
So come now, we are waiting
To hear your story and understand
How we can lend our hands to help you stand
And bring harmony to our land
And one by one we'll heal our land

CHORUS
So let's sing one song
With one voice
Let's come together as one human family on one accord
Let's stand shoulder to shoulder
Hand in hand

Closing remarks.................................York Mayo and Lee Hagon

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