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News Release

Gospel and Opera to Unite our Community

Knoxville, TN: What do you get when you combine the glorious music of gospel and opera in one concert?

Multiple standing ovations by a large crowd who have shouted “hallelujah” at the ten previous performances of Knoxville Opera Goes to Church...A Celebration of Talent! The 11th annual concert, sponsored by [Home Federal Bank](#), will feature the Knoxville Opera Gospel Choir and local soloists together with [Knoxville Opera](#) artists in a unique presentation of popular gospel, spirituals, Broadway, and opera favorites. The **free-admission concert** is a crown jewel in Knoxville Opera’s robust Education/Community Event Program, this season sponsored by [Pilot Flying J](#). The concert takes place on **Sunday, October 6, 2019 at 5:00 p.m. at New Covenant Baptist Church, 10319 Starkey Lane, in Knoxville.**

“We are excited to share our music with our audience at this concert. The 50 singers and instrumentalists represent 20 churches from eight areas in and around Knoxville and Nashville. Our goal is to unite all people in communal love through the eclectic combination of repertoire we present. It is an inspiration to both performers and our very enthusiastic audience,” said Jeanie Turner Melton, Choir Music Director.

The program’s gospel/spiritual selections will include Lion of Judah, When You’ve Been Blessed, That’s What I Believe, Bright Mansions Above, I Wanna Be Ready, and I’ll Make It. Featured in these selections will be local artists Shirley Herbert, Evelyn Jack, Sharon McCloud, Sonia Roberts, Christina Villaverde, Michael Rodgers, and Jacobi Yarbro.

The Broadway and opera selections will feature highlights from *Harriet Tubman*, *Madame Butterfly*, and *Romeo and Juliet*. These will be performed by the principal cast of Knoxville Opera’s October production of *Madame Butterfly*, which includes Metropolitan Opera soprano Danielle Pastin, Richard Troxell, Lisa Chavez, and Sean Anderson. They will be accompanied by Knoxville Opera Maestro Brian Salesky.

“For more than a decade Knoxville Opera has been privileged to contribute to our community with this unique event that unites all music fans who appreciate diverse musical cultures” said Salesky, “and we are most grateful for the support of our dedicated performers, our generous sponsors, and New Covenant Baptist Church all of whom make this unique experience possible.”

ABOUT KNOXVILLE OPERA

Knoxville Opera’s mission is to provide the residents of East Tennessee with high quality, locally produced opera and to contribute to the future of the operatic art form by educating the community about opera and its role in our culture. Knoxville Opera, founded in 1978, is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization whose programs are made possible, in part, by generous funding from many individual donors and major contributions from Aslan Foundation, Tennessee Arts Commission, National Endowment for the Arts, Pilot Flying J, Knox County, Regal Cinemas, Dr. Sharon Lord, The Sood Family, Nancy and Charlie Wagner, KaTom Restaurant Supply, City of Knoxville, Robert H. and Monica M. Cole Foundation, YMCA Knoxville, Home Federal Bank, First Tennessee Foundation, and Rotary Club of Knoxville.