



CHATTANOOGA BOYS CHOIR

***** FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*****

Community Sing – Tuesday, September 9, 2025

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* **What:** *We Shall Overcome* Community Sing and Recording Project

* **When:** Tuesday, September 9, 2025 - 5:30pm-6:30pm

* **Where:** Second Presbyterian Church / 700 Pine Street - Chattanooga, TN 37402

* **Admission:** no cost to participate

* **Phone:** 423-634-2299

* **Website:** <https://www.chattanoogaboyschoir.org/community-sing>

The Chattanooga Boys Choir is hosting an open community sing on Tuesday, September 9 to bring together members of the community to learn, rehearse, and record the treasured piece “We Shall Overcome.” Long noted as an anthem of the American Civil Rights Movement, the song symbolizes resilience and strength, and was closely associated with the Highlander Folk School in Monteagle, TN in the 1950s and 60s. This arrangement of the piece by American composer Tesfa Wondemagegnehu features beautiful harmonies and meaningful verses to convey themes of community and hope. The recording made at this event will be released on social media later in the month in celebration of the International Day of Peace.

NO EXPERIENCE OR PREPARATION IS REQUIRED! Interested participants are invited to arrive at Second Presbyterian Church (700 Pine Street) by 5:30pm. Those in attendance will be welcomed by a brief performance by members of the Chattanooga Boys Choir.

All gathered will then learn and rehearse the song “We Shall Overcome” arranged by Tesfa Wondemagegnehu, directed by CBC Artistic Director Vincent Oakes and led by members of the CBC. After approximately thirty minutes of rehearsal, everyone present will make a video recording of the song. This recording will be released through social media outlets on September 21 to coincide with the commemoration of the International Day of Peace. First celebrated in 1982, the International Day of Peace (also World Peace Day) is an initiative sponsored by the United Nations promoting peace across the world (<http://www.un.org/en/events/peaceday/>).

The Chattanooga Boys Choir led a similar effort with its first community sing of the South African hymn “Ukuthula” for the Voice4Peace movement beginning in 2016, resulting in a video that has been viewed tens of thousands of times online. The CBC has continued this effort with community sing recordings of “Be the Change,” “Love Is Love,” “When We Are Singing,” and more.

Vincent Oakes, Chattanooga Boys Choir Artistic Director

“I hope that such an effort will show how we have more in common – the love of making music and being in community – than there is different about us.”

“Singing has provided the soundtrack to the history and struggle for peace throughout the world for centuries, from spirituals to civil rights anthems to songs of protest. We hope to add our voice to this in a substantive and direct way through singing together and building community.”