

Concert Commentary

The following pieces were written using content gathered from student responses and input.

Come and Sing/Welcome

Rainbow Connection (Toni)

Welcome to Sabish Middle School's May Choir concert on Unity. Our first song was made famous by Kermit the Frog from the "Muppets" as he prepares to embark on a quest to find adventure. What is the rainbow connection? When we hear the words

*Have you been half asleep?
And have you heard voices?
I've heard them calling my name
Is this the sweet sound that calls the young sailors?*

We see that the rainbow connection can be interpreted as the distance between dreams and reality, the distance between where we are now and where we want to be. As we think about Unity within our community, one can think about that rainbow connection being the distance, work, commitment and understanding required for us to come together when people disagree, when we don't see eye-to-eye, and when we can't seem to find common ground. It is our hope that one day we will find that connection, that even though we may all come from very different places and believe very different things, that we may find the empathy and tolerance to come together.

Reach Out! (Gigi Martin)

A community that is united doesn't just happen overnight however. It requires people to go out of their way to help those in need and to lift up those who have fallen. The 6th Grade's next song will be a piece called "Reach Out." The song starts out slow and recognizes that things aren't perfect around us, but that we can make a change if "reach out" and lend a hand to our

neighbors. As you listen to this song, we invite you to think about the different ways YOU might reach out and help your neighbor.

Collection of Rounds (Janessa)

The 7th grade will soon perform FOUR musical rounds: a Hebrew community-building tune, a 16th century carol, an Australian nursery song, and a Hebrew folk song. A round is a piece of music where everyone sings the same song, but at different times. The piece is written so that the melody overlaps with itself and creates harmony. This type of musical structure allows each voice to ring out and express its individuality, but as more voices join in, we start to hear that the real beauty comes from how each individual voice unites and makes something greater. As we sing these next few songs, please hold your applause until after the fourth song-Thank you!

For The Beauty of the Earth/Seasons of Love (Kayla L.)

The next two songs are sung by our honor choir which meets once or twice a week after school. The first song we will sing will be "For the Beauty of the Earth" by John Rutter, a classic piece of choir music that talks about the beauty that we see all around us. The piece points out that one of the most beautiful places we see beauty is in each other. You will hear the lyrics "For the joy of human love, brother, sister, parent, child," pointing out that there is beauty in coming together...everyone. Beauty doesn't look a certain way, dress in specific clothes, speak a certain language, or have certain friends, it is found in each of us, in the talents we possess, and the way we build others up.

The second song is from the musical "Rent." Seasons of Love is a song that talks about the different ways that a person could measure their life. Some people value the material things they get, others value experiences they have like sharing a cup of coffee with others. However, the song encourages us to measure our time in love. (pause) What do you measure your life in?

One Call Away (Carmyn)

Charlie Puth's 2016 hit talks about reaching out to someone else and lifting them up when they are facing challenges. In class we talked about the difference between positive and negative communities and how one builds people up and the other tears them down. Many of us agreed that we tend to see more negativity in the world than positivity. We are performing this concert in hope that we bring more of that positivity to our world. All of the music chosen tonight focuses on some aspect of building a positive community, both at Sabish and in the greater Fond du Lac

community. We hope that as you listen, you think about how YOU can build up those around you and make your community a positive one.

Beautiful City (Paige C.)

The next song, "Beautiful City" will be sung by the 7th and 8th grade choirs together. As the year wraps up, we look back at our journey this year as a choir community, and look forward to the community we will build next year. In this song you will hear the lyrics:

"We may not reach the ending, But we can start. Slowly but surely mending, Brick by brick, Heart by heart. Now, maybe now, We start learning how." As the 8th graders get ready to move on to the high school, and the 7th grade gets ready to be the leaders at Sabish, we look forward to the new impact we can make on our communities, new and old.

If I had a Hammer (Grace A.)

Pete Seegar, who wrote our next song "If I had a hammer" was a prominent social activist and musician in the 1960's. He began the "Get America Singing" initiative, a collection of common folk songs that was meant to unite people of different beliefs and backgrounds using song. The choirs here at Sabish use the "Get America Singing" books frequently in our all-school sings (where we invite non-musical classes and teachers into our room for the day to make music with us. These all-school sings hope to bring together our school community using collaboration, fun, and singing. We invite you to join in on our next song, "If I had a Hammer" a song about going out and making *meaningful* change in our community. The words can be found as an insert in your program. Whether you have a big voice, small voice, loud voice, soft voice, or any voice in between, we welcome you to join us in singing :

We Shall Overcome (Maddie Johnson)

It was the most powerful song of the 20th century. It started out in church pews and picket lines, inspired one of the greatest freedom movements in U.S. history, and went on to topple governments and bring about reform all over the world. Word for word, the short, simple lyrics of "We Shall Overcome" might be some of the most influential words in the English language. "We Shall Overcome" has its roots in African American hymns from the early 20th century, and was first used as a protest song in 1945, when striking tobacco workers in Charleston, S.C., sang it on their picket line. By the 1950s, the song had been discovered by the young activists of the African American civil rights movement, and it quickly became the movement's unofficial anthem. Its verses were sung on protest marches and in sit-ins, through clouds of tear gas and under rows of police batons, and it brought courage and comfort to bruised, frightened activists as they waited in jail cells, wondering if they would survive the night. In the decades since, the song has circled the globe and has been embraced by civil rights and pro-democracy

movements in dozens of nations worldwide. From Northern Ireland to Eastern Europe, from Berlin to Beijing, and from South Africa to South America, its message of solidarity and hope has been sung in dozens of languages, in presidential palaces and in dark prisons, and it continues to lend its strength to all people struggling to be free. As you listen to "We Shall Overcome," think about the reasons it has brought strength and support to so many people for so many years. And remember that someone, somewhere, is singing it right now.

[-http://www.loc.gov/teachers/lyrical/songs/overcome.html](http://www.loc.gov/teachers/lyrical/songs/overcome.html)

Unity (Anyone)

Thank you for coming and participating in our concert this evening. Our last song is titled "Unity." In this piece you hear the words "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell in unity." That phrase encapsulates what we hope you take away from this concert. As you head home tonight, we hope that something has spoken to you about how we view community, how we participate in our local groups, and how we can be the positive change that the world needs today. Thank for sharing your time with us this evening. Without further adieu, here is the Sabish choirs along with the Cardinal Singers, performing Unity.