

Midday Music at Myers Park
“Together, We Shall Overcome.”
a concert featuring the music of African American composers

Wednesday, February 16th, 2022 | 12:00pm | Sanctuary
Jennifer Wiggins, mezzo- soprano
Lauren Russell, mezzo-soprano
Evan Wesley Currie, Associate Director of Music and Organist & Pianist
Jim Deal, Director of Multimedia and Craig Fisher, Director of Video Production

~The Program~

As You Make Your Bed from <i>Rise and Fall of Mahogany</i>	Kurt Weill
Negro Speaks of Rivers	Lauren Russell
Three Dreams of Portraits	Margaret Bonds
1. Minstrel Man	
2. Dream Variation	
3. I, Too	
	Jennifer Wiggins
Love Let the Wind Cry... How I Adore Thee	Undine S. Moore
A Good Assassination Should Be Quiet	David N. Baker
	Lauren Russell
My Souls Been Anchored in the Lord	Florence B. Price
	Jennifer Wiggins
Improvisation on “We Shall Overcome”	arr. Carl Haywood
	Evan Wesley Currie, organ



Jennifer Wiggins is flattered to once again be invited to perform at Myers Park United Methodist Church where she performed in “A Night At the Opera” in July 2021. A native of Charlotte, NC, dramatic mezzo-soprano Jennifer Elaine Wiggins, is praised for “a voice that [fills] up the stage and [your] heart.” (Smile Politely).

This season as a guest artist at Chun University, Ms. Wiggins is preparing to perform the role of “Grandma” in *Fanny Crosby*, an oratorio composed of hymns by Fanny Crosby and will also be guest appearing at Myers Park Baptist Church, performing music of African American composers. Further, she will be reprising her role of “Susie” in Opera Carolina's *The Magic Potion*. As a Resident Artist with Opera Carolina, she recently covered the role of Grandma, and performed as a member of the ensemble, in the premiere of Douglas Tappin's "I Dream." Past collaborations with Opera Carolina include Opera Xpress, which tours to elementary schools throughout the Carolinas and Georgia. She performed the title role of “Ugly Duckling” in *The Ugly Duckling*, “Queen “Bee/Sofia” in *The Busy Bee*, and “Susie” in *The Magic Potion*. Additionally, she performs in various community outreach events such as performances at Seventh Street Market, UNCC International Festival and Charlotte SHOUT!

Audiences have also seen Ms. Wiggins in *A Concert for Charlotte* with The Charlotte Symphony Orchestra, Mercedes in *Carmen* and the Third Lady in *Die Zauberflöte* with Little Opera Company of Charlotte, Ursule in *Beatrice and Benedict*, and Azucena in *Il Trovatore* with Lyric Theatre @ Illinois, and Brahms *Alto Rhapsody*, and Margaret Bonds' *The Ballad of the Brown King* with Champaign Sings under the direction of Dr. Allegra Martin.

Ms. Wiggins received her Masters of Music in Vocal Performance and Literature from University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and resides in Charlotte, NC.



Lauren Russell – A mezzo-soprano on the rise, Lauren Russell from Asheville, North Carolina is a 2018 graduate of Wingate University. Earning her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Music Performance with a concentration in Vocal Music, Ms. Russell has performed leading roles in *Help, help, The Globolinks!*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *The Falling and Rising*, *Dido and Aeneas*, and *Hansel and Gretel*, supporting roles in *H.M.S. Pinafore*, and various opera scenes performed by Wingate Opera under the direction of Jessie Wright-Martin. Ms. Russell has been a featured mezzo-soprano soloist in Wingate University's Singers master works of J.S. Bach's *Mass in b minor* and *St. John Passion*, along with Mozart's *Coronation Mass* and various other mass works under Dr. Kenney Potter. Currently with OperaCarolina, Ms. Russell has been in the chorus of *La Fille du Regiment*, *La Boheme*, *Carmen*, *Eugene Oregin*, *La Boheme*, and *Macbeth*. In 2016, Ms. Russell toured internationally with Wingate University Singers to Vienna, Prague, and Salzburg. Ms. Russell was the first mezzo-soprano in the Bach Akademie's Emerging Artist Program in 2018 under the direction of Dr. Scott Allen Jarrett. In 2019, Ms. Russell performed as the Alto Soloist in Craig Hella Johnson's *Considering Matthew Shephard* under the direction of Dr. Kenney Potter and the Alto Soloist in Handel's *Messiah* with the Winston-Salem Symphony. In 2020, Ms. Russell debuted the new musical, *Robert Smalls*, playing the pivotal role of Robert's mother.