



## ***Be the Change: A Musical Invitation to the Community***

The Rogue Valley Peace Choir has inspired audiences to standing ovations this season with powerful messages of peace, social justice, and caretaking the Earth.

Now, it promises singing, dancing, and wildly engaging percussive flourishes during the final concerts of the the choir's 23<sup>rd</sup> season. With these performances — passionately directed by Rob Griswell-Lowry and skillfully accompanied by Dr. Mikiko Petrucelli — the nearly 100-member choir also invites the community to “be the change we want to see in the world.”

The choir will perform at the United Church of Christ, 1801 E. Jackson St., Medford, at 7 p.m. on Friday, May 15. Donations at this concert will benefit the [Northwest Seasonal Workers Association](#). The choir will perform the same repertoire at 3 p.m. on Sunday, May 17, at the First United Methodist Church, 175 N. Main St., Ashland.

Early arrival at both venues is recommended. A suggested donation of \$20 is gratefully accepted, but not required.

The concerts' theme comes from the title of the song *Be the Change*. The song's lyrics revolve around the idea that we can't look outside ourselves for change, but must embody the changes we want to see in the world. The song quotes the Reverend Doctor Martin Luther King Jr., who said, "Darkness does not drive out the darkness, only light can do that. Hatred does not drive out the hatred, only love can do that."

“As a choir,” says Griswell-Lowry, “we sing truths like these to remind ourselves, and all who hear our songs, that the responsibility for creating a world worth living in belongs to all of us.

“We've all heard that the pen is mightier than the sword,” he adds, “As singers in our choral community, we also know that the power of the pen — of words and ideas — is amplified and enhanced by the music that makes songs. When the Peace Choir shares its songs with our community, we not only share our hope for a better world, we help listeners find — or rediscover — their own hope.”

Songs for the choir's repertoire are chosen by choir members themselves to express these themes in heart-felt and thoughtful ways. Choir members continue to be a part of the growing movement that recognizes how pro-actively and collectively we can make a difference on many fronts: we can shed light on injustice, we can support an end to wars, and we can take care of our Earth and each other when we work together.