

# SOWETO GOSPEL CHOIR PRESENTS: *Hope, It's Been a Long Time Coming*



**Friday, October 14 | 7:30 p.m.**

**Stephen B. Humphrey Theater, Saint John's University**

This all-new concert by 3-time Grammy®-winning Soweto Gospel Choir commemorates South Africa's Freedom Movement and the Civil Rights Movement in the United States. Bringing joy to all, "HOPE" opens with a rousing program of South African freedom songs that inspired their Rainbow Nation. Then the choir's uplifting performance moves to the United States with beautiful renditions of the music of the Civil Rights Movement, including works by legendary artists Billie Holiday, James Brown, Otis Redding, Curtis Mayfield and the one-and-only, Aretha Franklin. Get ready, "HOPE" is a concert that will live forever in your hearts!

## ARTIST WEBSITE

<https://www.sowetogospelchoir.com/>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCaur5Bi1ruBhrJ2Z6nYsfmgKey>

## TERMINOLOGY

**Apartheid:** A system of policies that segregated people based on their race and created political, social, and economic discrimination. Apartheid became law in 1948 and did not come to an end until 1994.

**Township:** In South Africa, "township" typically refers to a racially segregated, underdeveloped residential settlement, usually located outside of a city. Soweto is an abbreviation for South Western Townships, which encompasses an urban area bordering the south side of Johannesburg, in South Africa.

## ENGAGE

Soweto Gospel Choir was formed in 2003 as South Africa was moving out of the apartheid era and beginning an inspiring return to Democracy. This concert features rousing Freedom Songs mixed with music from the American Civil Rights Movement, combined with traditional African gospel music and spirituals sung in a variety of languages.

- How did Soweto mix traditional South African songs and harmonies with music from the United States and other countries?
- In what ways are the themes from the Civil Rights era music like those of South Africa's Freedom Songs? How are they different?
- How does music reflect a culture and society?

Music has a long history with social movements and calls to resist laws and policies that separate and discriminate. It can evoke strong emotions as well as calm us when we are feeling overwhelmed.

- How did the performance make you feel?
- How did the movements and dancing impact the feeling of the performance?
- Are there other causes that you can think of where music plays an important role?

Gospel music plays an important role in both the United States and South Africa's societies.

- How did slavery affect the creation of gospel music in the United States?
- How did colonialism affect the creation of gospel music in South Africa?
- What similarities or differences do you notice between the two styles?