

## Evolution and Development of Black Gospel Music

Written by Staff Writer

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The University of South Carolina announces a special performance by the University Gospel Choir. Under the direction of Dr. Carl R. Wells, the Gospel Choir will present the Evolution and Development of Black Gospel Music on Saturday, April 20th at 7:30 p.m., at Second Calvary Baptist Church, which is located at 1110 Mason Rd., Columbia, SC 29203.

In its 5th semester of existence, the group affords University of South Carolina students the opportunity to earn an hour of elective credit while exploring the diverse history, soul, and sounds of gospel music. The class emphasizes gospel as a means of practicing vocal technique, but also helps students understand the historical and sociological significance of the music in African-American culture, its connection to other forms of music, and its functional purpose.

"African-American music was rarely art for the sake of art," Wells said. "If you think about slaves in the field, they weren't just singing, they were singing to make the day go better, for survival. It becomes a way of helping voice what people are experiencing, but it also connects them to a God who helps them in the midst of their struggles. Also, more so than other forms of music, African-American music is a dialogue, not a monologue; the performer sings, but there's an element of participation from the audience." The concert is free and open to the public.

The concert will feature traditional gospel music, spirituals, ragtime, blues, jazz and big band music.