



Free Tickets Available for Tanner Gift of Music Concert with Brian Stokes Mitchell and Megan Hilty

SALT LAKE CITY — Free tickets to the O.C. Tanner Gift of Music concert featuring Broadway stars Brian Stokes Mitchell and Megan Hilty will be available on Tuesday, April 16, 2019 at 9:00 a.m. at ChurchofJesusChrist.org/events. The musical event by The Tabernacle Choir at Temple Square and Utah Symphony will be held one day only on Friday, May 10, 2019 at 8:00 p.m. as part of the [Golden Spike 150th Anniversary Celebration](#) events and activities.

The O.C. Tanner Gift of Music concert—usually held every two years--was scheduled this year at the request of the State of Utah to coincide with the Golden Spike 150th anniversary. This year's guest artists were announced in February by the Spike 150 Commission as part of its featured celebrations. The public is now invited to get tickets so they can participate in the Gift of Music concert.

Brian Stokes Mitchell first performed with the Choir in an earlier Tanner Gift of Music concert in September 2008, which also featured Denyce Graves and guest conductor Erich Kunzel. The response to Mitchell was so positive that he was invited back that very same year as the featured guest for the Choir's 2008 Christmas concerts with narrator Edward Hermann. Stokes, as he is affectionately called, has also performed in featured concerts with Utah Symphony in 2013 and 2017. He can be heard on the Choir's *Ring Christmas Bells* CD and DVD as well as on its *Mormon Tabernacle Choir and Friends* CD. Mitchell has received Tony, Drama Desk, and Outer Critics Circle awards for his starring roles on Broadway. In 2016 he was inducted into the Theatre Hall of Fame. Currently he is appearing in a new CBS TV show, *Fam*.

This is Megan Hilty's first time performing with The Tabernacle Choir and Utah Symphony. She is well-known on Broadway for her leading roles in *Wicked*, *9 to 5: The Musical*, *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, and *Noises Off*, for which she received a 2016 Tony Award nomination. Television audiences will recognize her talent from the two-year series *Smash* about an actress trying to land a role in a Broadway musical.

The Tanner Gift of Music concert is just one of many events slated to celebrate one of the most important historical events in American history which took place on May 10, 1869, at Promontory Summit, Utah with the completion of the transcontinental railroad. In 1869, as the last rails were laid—and the ceremonial golden spike was driven—shortly after 12:30 p.m., the promised telegraph signal alerted everyone across the nation that the work had been completed.

Then, in Salt Lake City at the signal, the national flag was raised, brass bands played, and artillery salutes were fired from the court house, city hall, and Arsenal Hill, letting everyone in the valley know that the work was accomplished. The principal business places, stores, and factories were closed, and work was suspended for the rest of the day. In about an hour's time, the citizens of Salt Lake City began to assemble in the Tabernacle on Temple Square for a

celebratory gathering of dignitaries and residents with music and accolades of appreciation. In the years that followed, The Tabernacle Choir performed at both the 50th and the 100th anniversaries of the driving of the Golden Spike.

Tickets for the Tanner Gift of Music concert are free but are required. Admission will be open to everyone eight years and older.

The O.C. Tanner Gift of Music Concert series began in 1983 from the combined vision of the late Utah philanthropist O.C. Tanner and Gordon B. Hinckley, former president of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. These two life-long neighbors and friends wanted to share the talents of The Tabernacle Choir and Utah Symphony as a free gift to the community through periodic concerts. Through a generous endowment established by Mr. Tanner and his family, this will be the Choir and the Symphony's 18th concert and gift to the community.

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