
Biographical Sketch of the Rev. Raymond Wise, Ph. D.

*“Bridging the gap between
the gospel and classical worlds!”*

Rev. Raymond Wise, Ph. D., a native of Baltimore, Md., is the son of C. Dexter Wise Jr. and Rev. Julia Virginia Wise. He began his musical career at the age of three, singing gospel music with his family singing group “The Wise Singers.” Rev. Wise was educated through the Baltimore City Public School System and graduated second out of class of 500 from the Paul Laurence Dunbar Community High School in 1979.



He then went on to Denison University (Granville, Ohio) where he reorganized the Black Student Union Choir, started the Black Student Union Dance company, and earned a B.F.A. in Music. From there he went on to study Opera, Art, and German at the Institute for European Studies in Vienna, Austria. Then on to study African-American History, Music, and Dance at San Francisco State University in San Francisco, California. He also completed an apprenticeship in the business and recording of Gospel Music with the Walter Hawkins Corporation in Oakland, California. Rev. Wise was awarded a Graduate Fellowship from the Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio where earned his Masters in Music Education and Ohio Teacher’s Certification. In addition he also completed a Doctorate in Music Education at the Ohio State University.

Rev. Wise began his acting career at the age of 9, when he played the role of Benjamin in a regional theater production of “The Me Nobody Knows”. He sang the role of Amahl in Menotti’s “Amahl and the Night Visitors.” As a teen he served as a chorus member and soloist for the Baltimore Opera Company’s education outreach program and performed nationally and abroad with the Paul Laurence Dunbar Chamber Singers, under the direction of Hugh Carey. Wise has performed as a counter tenor in such works as Handel’s Messiah and in Leslie Burrs work entitled “Declaration of Joy” written for chorus, soloists, and orchestra. Wise most recently performed the role of Marcus in the Opera Columbus premiere of Susan Kander’s opera entitled “Somebody’s Children” and as a soloist with the Columbus Symphony Orchestra.

Raymond Wise, has directed more than 30 choirs during his career and has prepared choirs to perform for national recording artists such as Kenny Rogers, Diana Ross, Yolanda Adams, Tramaine Hawkins, Wintley Phipps, and others. Wise served as the Chorus Master for the world premiere of the Opera Columbus Production of Leslie Burr’s “Vanqui.” Wise also served as chorus master for Burrs “Declaration of Joy.” Wise served as the musical director for Carlyle Brown’s production of “Yellow Moon” and most recently served as the Chorus Master for the Columbus Symphony production of Hannibal Lokumbe’s “African Portraits.”

As a composer Wise has penned more than 500 compositions that have been performed and recorded by local, national, and international recording artists. Some of his notable works include “Afro-American Suite” written for Bass-Baritone and Chorus. Wise co-wrote the script for “God What Color Is Trouble” with director Ron Pitts and has written the music for more than 20 original musical theater productions, including Dwight Collin’s “Dark Symphony,” the Samuel S. Davis production of “The Snow Queen,” and the Amera-flora production of “Listen With Your Heart.” Wise also composed the musical score for the children’s opera “Barefoot.” Barefoot, originally composed to be performed by Opera Columbus’ educational outreach program has also been performed by The Children’s Theater Company of Winston-Salem and Winston-Salem State University in which Dr. Maya Angelou performed the role of narrator.

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Raymond Wise, has studied ballet, jazz, modern, tap, African, ethnic, and experimental dance. He performed on the East Coast with the Baltimore Dance Theater Company, Baltimore, Md. under artistic director Eva Anderson. He also performed on the West Coast with the EMBAJE Dance Ensemble from San Francisco State University under artistic director Dr. Alberta Rose. Since then Wise has taught and instructed dance at The Samuel S. Davis Youth Complex for the Performing Arts and the King

Complex for the Visual and Performing Arts both in Columbus, Ohio. In addition Wise has served as choreographer for many theatrical productions and currently instructs tap dance and liturgical dance at the Center for the Gospel Arts.

In addition Rev. Wise has appeared on radio and television, recorded 16 albums, performed with several opera singers, orchestras, dance companies, professional recording groups, and has toured extensively throughout the United States, Europe, and Asia, as a singer, dancer, pianist, composer, choral director, lecturer, and teacher.

Rev. Wise's goal is to use his education and experience to establish an accredited "Center For The Gospel Arts" in which "Gospel Music" and the "Gospel Arts" can be elevated, instructed, and promoted. To this end, he founded and is President of Raise Productions (1985), a gospel music production company (Columbus, Ohio). Raise has also developed performing groups which have performed throughout the United States and Europe, won Gospel Music Excellence Awards, produced musical reviews, plays, and concerts, recorded several albums. Several of the Raise groups are national recording groups who have recorded on both the Raise Record label as well as various national gospel record labels. These groups include Raise Choir, Family, Raise Mass Choir, and the Raise Kids.

Raise established "The Center For The Gospel Arts" in 1989 to provide educational training for gospel artists and the community. He has developed specialized curriculums in the gospel arts and texts for this school, which offers 30+ classes per week, and has served over 5000 since its opening.

Rev. Wise has developed and implemented courses in African-American Gospel Music and Spirituals at several universities within Ohio. He presently instructs courses in Gospel Music and conducts Gospel ensembles at The Ohio State University, Denison University, Trinity Lutheran Seminary, and the Columbus School for Girls. His knowledge of both the gospel and classical music genre has enabled him to serve as a consultant and clinician in academic and gospel music settings across the nation and abroad. This has enabled him to bridge the musical gap between the gospel and classical worlds.

Of all of the accomplishments and experiences, the most outstanding aspect of Rev. Wise's life is that he is "Saved" (a born again Christian). Therefore, he is committed also to "Raising the Word of God Higher," so that lost souls will be led to Christ. And as a result of this commitment, Rev. Wise received and accepted the call to the Gospel Ministry and was licensed by the Shiloh Baptist Church in 1989. Rev. Wise presently serves as an Associate Minister at Faith Ministries Interdenominational Church, where Dr. C. Dexter Wise III is pastor.

So you see Rev. Raymond Wise in not merely a *Man* with many talents, or a *Musician* with many accomplishments, or even a *Man* of great vision, but also an anointed *Minister* of the gospel. So as he comes forth to minister, his prayer and our prayer is that you will be blessed by his ministry.