



City of Arts & Innovation

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Sept. 23, 2016

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City of Riverside, Local Churches to Host Healing and Unity Service Sept. 29

Ecumenical event to feature support for law enforcement and prayers for crime victims and families

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – The City of Riverside will partner with local churches and law enforcement organizations to hold the Riverside Healing and Unity Service at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 29 on the Benjamin Franklin Stage in the breezeway of Riverside City Hall, 3900 Main Street.

The multi-denominational event will bring together people from a variety of faiths to show support for local law enforcement and to extend prayers for victims of crime and their families.

“I’m humbled by the eagerness of both our faith community and our law enforcement agencies to come together to make an important statement about the need for unity,” Mayor Rusty Bailey said. “All across our community, we have people whose hearts are hurting, but we also are bound together by a shared sense of hope. It’s important that we come together to acknowledge that.”

Sponsors include the Mayor’s Office, Riverside Clergy Association, Riverside Police Department, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Riverside County District Attorney’s Office, Riverside Public Utilities and the California Highway Patrol.

“We are living in difficult times,” said the Rev. Paul S. Munford, president of the Riverside Clergy Association. “Whether it’s the officer-involved shootings across the country that are being questioned by the public, or the unprecedented attack on law enforcement in Dallas, we need more than ever to come together and find common ground.”

Speakers will include Mayor Bailey, the Rev. Paul Munford, Police Chief Sergio Diaz, the Rev. Larry E. Campbell, Dr. Shukavak Dasa, District Attorney Mike Hestrin, Waudieur E. “Woodie” Rucker-Hughes, Chief Bill Dance, Rabbi Suzanne Singer, Dr. Ibrahim Massoud and Deacon John De Gano. The Riverside Police Department Color Guard will present the colors, and performers from Encore performing arts school will perform the National Anthem and a musical selection, “Seasons of Love.”

The format will include words of unity from various speakers interspersed with prayers for peace, law enforcement, victims of violence, bereaved families and a closing prayer. The event is expected to last an hour.

“Riverside is a diverse and inclusive community, and this event demonstrates that we take that very seriously,” Mayor Pro Tem Andy Melendrez said. “I commend the many different groups and organizations coming together to make an important statement.”