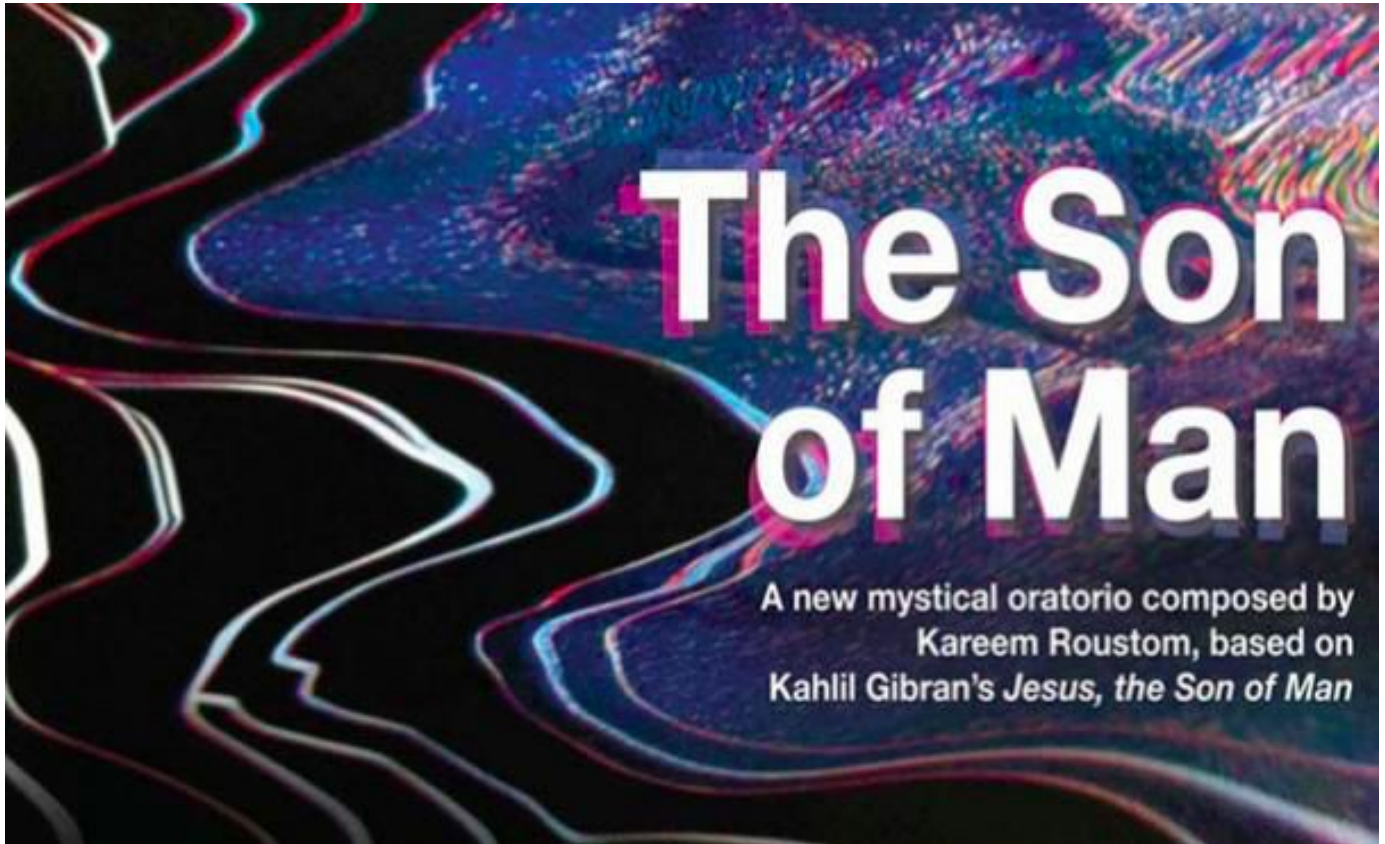




The United Parish in Brookline

American Baptist • United Church of Christ • United Methodist



April 19, 2020
Second Sunday of Easter
featuring *The Son of Man* Oratorio

CHIMING THE TRINITY

We call forth God the Creator, Savior and Holy Spirit in musical tones.

GREETINGS

We warmly welcome all into our midst.

Susan DeSelms and Kent French
Minister of Music and Senior Pastor

CENTERING PRAYER *in unison*

We center ourselves in the awareness of God's presence.

God of Love,
to you all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from you no secrets are hid:

Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen

The Son of Man

music by Kareem Roustom

text by Khalil Gibran

with the Chancel Choir of United Parish and Coro Allegro

Elissa Alvarez, *soprano*

Barbara Poeschl-Edrich, *harp*

Amy Oraftik, *alto*

Robert Schulz and Jonathan Hess, *percussion*

Jim DeSelms, *tenor*

Tony Gimenez, *trumpet*

David Kravitz, *bass*

David Hodgkins, *director*

Susan DeSelms, *organist and co-director*

*presented in worship on Sunday, May 8, 2011, at United Parish
and recorded Sunday, May 15, 2011 at Church of the Covenant, Boston*

I. PHUMIAH, THE HIGH PRIESTESS OF SIDON

Alissa Alvarz, *soprano*

An Invocation

Take your harps and let me sing.
Beat your strings, the silver and the gold;
For I would sing the dauntless Man
Who slew the dragon of the valley,
Then gazed down with pity
Upon the thing He had slain.

Take your harps and sing with me
The lofty Oak upon the height,
The sky-hearted and the ocean-handed Man,
Who kissed the pallid lips of death,
Yet quivers now upon the mouth of life.

Take your harps and let us sing
The fearless Hunter on the hill,
Who marked the beast,
and shot His viewless arrow,
And brought the horn and tusk
Down to the earth.

Take your harps and sing with me
The joyous song of sea and cliff.
The gods are dead,
And they are lying still
In the forgotten isle of a forgotten sea.

And He who slew them sits upon His throne.
He was but a youth.
Spring had not yet given Him full beard,
And His summer was still young in His field.

Take your harps and sing with me
The tempest in the forest
That breaks the dry branch
and the leafless twig,
Yet sends the living root to nestle deeper
at the breast of earth.

Take your harps and sing with me
The deathless song of our Beloved.
Nay, my maidens, stay your hands.
Lay by your harps.
We cannot sing Him now.
The faint whisper of our song
cannot reach His tempest,
Nor pierce the majesty of His silence.

Lay by your harps
and gather close around me,
I would repeat His words to you,
And I would tell you of His deeds,
For the echo of His voice is deeper
than our passion.

Let the Dead Bury Their Dead

It has been said that Jesus was the enemy of Rome and Judea.

But I say that Jesus was the enemy of no man and no race.

I have heard Him say, “The birds of the air and the mountain tops are not mindful of the serpents in their dark holes.

“Let the dead bury their dead. Be you yourself among the living, and soar high.”

I was not one of His disciples. I was but one of the many who went after Him to gaze upon His face.

He looked upon Rome and upon us who are the slaves of Rome, as a father looks upon his children playing with toys and fighting among themselves for the larger toy. And He laughed from His height.

He was greater than State and race; He was greater than revolution.

He was single and alone, and He was an awakening.

He wept all our unshed tears and smiled all our revolts.

We knew it was in His power to be born with all who are not yet born, and to bid them see, not with their eyes but with His vision.

III. MARY MAGDALENE

Alissa Alvarez, soprano

On Meeting Jesus for the First Time

It was in the month of June when I saw Him for the first time. He was walking in the wheat field when I passed by with my handmaidens, and He was alone.

The rhythm of His steps was different from other men’s, and the movement of His body was like naught I had seen before.

Men do not pace the earth in that manner. And even now I do not know whether He walked fast or slow.

My handmaidens pointed their fingers at Him and spoke in shy whispers to one another. And I stayed my steps for a moment, and raised my hand to hail Him. But He did not turn His face, and He did not look at me. And I hated Him. I was swept back into myself, and I was as cold as if I had been in a snow-drift. And I shivered.

That night I beheld Him in my dreaming; and they told me afterward that I screamed in my sleep and was restless upon my bed.

It was in the month of August that I saw Him again, through my window. He was sitting in the shadow of the cypress tree across my garden, and He was still as if He had been carved out of stone.

And my slave, the Egyptian, came to me and said, "That man is here again. He is sitting there across your garden."

And I gazed at Him, and my soul quivered within me, for He was beautiful.

Was it my aloneness, or was it His fragrance, that drew me to Him? Was it a hunger in my eyes that desired comeliness, or was it His beauty that sought the light of my eyes?

Even now I do not know.

I walked to Him with my scented garments and my golden sandals, the sandals the Roman captain had given me, even these sandals. And when I reached Him, I said, "Good-morrow to you."

And He said, "Good-morrow to you, Miriam."

He looked at me. And suddenly I was as if naked, and I was shy.

Yet He had only said, "Good-morrow to you."

And then I said to Him, "Will you not come to my house?"

"Am I not already in your house?"

I did not know what He meant then, but I know now.

And I said, "Will you not have wine and bread with me?"

"Yes, Miriam, but not now."

Not now, not now. And the voice of the sea was in those two words, and the voice of the wind and the trees. And when He said them unto me, life spoke to death.

And now again I said to Him, "Come into my house and share bread and wine with me."

"Why do you bid me to be your guest?"

And I said, "I beg you to come into my house." And it was all that was sod in me, and all that was sky in me calling unto Him.

Then He looked at me, and the noontide of His eyes was upon me, and He said, "You have many lovers, and yet I alone love you. Other men love themselves in your nearness. I love you in your self. Other men see a beauty in you that shall fade away.

"I alone love the unseen in you."

Then He said in a low voice, "Go away now. If this cypress tree is yours and you would not have me sit in its shadow, I will walk my way."

And I cried to Him and I said, "Master, come to my house. I have incense to burn for you, and a silver basin for your feet. You are a stranger and yet not a stranger. I entreat you, come to my house."

Then He stood up and looked at me even as the seasons might look down upon the field, and He smiled. And He said again: "All men love you for themselves. I love you for yourself."

And then He walked away.

Was it a breath born in my garden that moved to the east? Or was it a storm that would shake all things to their foundations?

I knew not, but on that day the sunset of His eyes slew the dragon in me, and I became a woman, I became Miriam, Miriam of Mijdel.

IV. JOHN THE BAPTIST

David Kravitz, *bass*

He Speaks in Prison to His Disciples

I am not silent in this foul hole while the voice of Jesus is heard on the battlefield. I am not to be held nor confined while He is free.

I am only the thunder of His lightning.

They caught me unwarned. Perhaps they will lay hands on Him also. Yet not before He has pronounced His word in full. And He shall overcome them.

His chariot shall pass over them, and the hoofs of His horses shall trample them, and He shall be triumphant.

They shall go forth with lance and sword, but He shall meet them with the power of the Spirit.

His blood shall run upon the earth, but they themselves shall know the wounds and the pain thereof, and they shall be baptized in their tears until they are cleansed of their sins.

They say I am in league with Him, and that our design is to urge the people to rise and revolt.

Aye, behind these prison walls I am indeed an ally to Jesus of Nazareth, and He shall lead my armies, horse and foot. And I myself, though a captain, am not worthy to loose the strings of His sandals.

Go to Him and repeat my words, and then in my name beg Him for comfort and blessing.

I shall not be here long. At night 'twixt waking and waking I feel slow feet with measured steps treading above this body. And when I hearken, I hear the rain falling upon my grave.

Go to Jesus, and say that John of Kedron whose soul is filled with shadows and then emptied again, prays for Him, while the grave-digger stands close by, and the swordman outstretches his hand for his wages.

A Lamentation

On the fortieth day after His death, all the women neighbors came to the house of Mary to console her and to sing threnodies. And one of the women sang this song:

Whereto my Spring, whereto?
And to what other space your perfume ascending?
In what other fields shall you walk?
And to what sky shall you lift up your head to speak your heart?

These valleys shall be barren,
And we shall have naught but dried fields and arid.
All green things will parch in the sun,
And our orchards will bring forth sour apples,
And our vineyards bitter grapes.
We shall thirst for your wine,
And our nostrils will long for your fragrance.

Whereto Jesus, whereto,
Son of my neighbour Mary,
And comrade to my son?
Whither, our first Spring, and to what other fields?
Will you return to us again?
Will you in your love-tide visit the barren shores of our dreams?

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

*We pray together for our congregation, our surrounding community,
the nation and the world.*

Amy Norton and Jaz Buchanan
Associate Pastor and Seminarian

One: O God, hear our prayer;
All: **And guide us in your love.**

OFFERING *We offer our gifts for God's service and our visitor cards. No gift is too small or too large. All are precious. You can give online on our [YouTube page](#) or at unitedparishbrookline.org/giving-stewardship.*

Invitation

We hear from community members about why they take part.

Betty Gray
Exalting in Worship Ministry Team

VI. A MAN FROM LEBANON

Nineteen Centuries Afterward

Master, master singer,

Master of words unspoken,
Seven times was I born, and seven times have I died
And behold I live again,
Remembering a day and a night among the hills,
When your tide lifted us up.

Master, Master Poet,
Master of our silent desires,
The heart of the world quivers with the throbbing of your heart,
But it burns not with your song.
The world sits listening to your voice in tranquil delight,
But it rises not from its seat
To scale the ridges of your hills.

Seven times was I born and seven times have I died,
And now I live again, and I behold you,
The fighter among fighters,
The poet of poets
King above all kings,

Master, Master of Light,
Whose eye dwells in the seeking fingers of the blind,
You are still despised and mocked,
A man too weak and infirm to be God,
A God too much man to call forth adoration.
Their Mass and their hymn,
Their sacrament and their rosary, are for their imprisoned self.
You are their yet distant self, their far-off cry, and their passion.

But Master, Sky-heart, Knight of our fairer dream,
You do still tread this day;
Nor bows nor spears shall stay your steps.
You walk through all our arrows.
You smile down upon us,
And though you are the youngest of us all
You father us all.

Poet, Singer, Great Heart,
May our God bless your name,
And the womb that held you, and the breasts that gave you milk.
And may God forgive us all.

***HOLY BUSINESS**

We share news of God's work in our community's activities.

***BENEDICTION**

We receive a blessing as we prepare to depart this sacred gathering.

Many thanks to Jack Lilburn for his generous edition of this online worship service.

Join us for Zoom Coffee Hour, April 19, 12:20-1:30pm

<https://zoom.us/j/94230761806?pwd=b1ZCOTlicWtmZkozMmpDZFF6cnhvZz09>

or call Call 253-215-8782

Meeting ID: 942 3076 1806

Password: 079110

Or find your local number at

<https://zoom.us/u/ad7hylYCuT>

WELCOME

We at the United Parish in Brookline believe that all people are made in the image of God and embrace and cherish every person and every kind of family. Jesus Christ welcomed everyone; we seek to follow his example in our own life and worship, by extending God's love and grace abundantly and equally to everyone. We affirm and welcome all people to share in worship, fellowship and leadership with us, to join us in a diversity of race, gender, sexual identity, physical and mental ability, ethnicity and economic means.

We have joined with other Open and Affirming (United Church of Christ) and Welcoming and Affirming (American Baptist Churches USA), as well as with the Reconciling Ministries Network (United Methodist Churches) to declare that we are and will remain open to all people.

We invite you to consider becoming a member of the United Parish family. You may become a member by transferring membership or by a statement of faith. If you desire to retain ties with a former church, we invite you to become an associate or affiliate member for the time you are with us.

*We ask that you silence all electronic devices.
Please see an usher if you would like a hearing assistive device.*

*Because our building is open to the public,
an adult should accompany children if/when they leave the worship service.*

Ministers
Senior Pastor
Associate Pastor
Seminarian
Minister of Music
Assistant Music Director
Communications and Office Administrator
Building Usage Coordinator
Accounting Administrator
Nursery Supervisor
Pastor Emerita

The People of the United Parish
Kent French
Amy Norton
Jasmine Buchanan
Susan DeSelms
Josaphat Contreras
Sarah Fitzpatrick
Helen Hassinger
Donald Firth
Jenna Bergquist
Patricia Coughlin



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