

Full Cold Moon: Songs of Comfort and Reflection

Full Cold Moon: Songs of Comfort and Reflection brings together songs and poetry reflecting the two sides of the inevitable universal passage through difficult times. Grief is the deep winter of our emotions, yet it's also a time of seeking comfort and nurturing hope. The moon in Jewish tradition reminds us of the promise of restoration. Congregation Bet Haverim offers this collection to help illuminate the journey through loss and to provide a space for reflection on meaningful themes like those of the Yizkor service at Yom Kippur.

This EP presents expressive choral arrangements sung by the CBH Chorus along with selections from the CBH String Ensemble, spoken word with Rabbi Joshua Lesser and a vocal duet by lay cantors Brad Davidorf and Gayanne Geurin.

This is the third release in the four-album Merkavah Project from CBH's music program, all produced by Will Robertson.

Chorus of Congregation Bet Haverim

Soprano: Nefesh Chaya, Julie Fishman, Nancy Gerber, Joy Goodman, Ellie McGraw, Irene Medovoy, Theresa Prestwood, Rina Rosenberg, Faith Russler

Alto: Jesse Harris Bathrick, Elke Davidson, Gayanne Geurin, Kim Goldsmith, Rebecca Green, Carrie Hausman, Alix Laing, Maddie Laing, Rebecca Leary Safon, AnnaLaura Scheer, Valerie Singer, Linda Weiskoff, Valerie Wolpe, McKenzie Wren

Tenor: Ned Bridges, Brad Davidorf, Faye Dresner, Henry Farber, Alan Hymowitz, Lynne Norton

Bass: Dan Arnold, Gregg Bedol, David Borthwick, Gary Falcon, Bill Laing, Howard Winer, Bill Witherspoon

CBH String Ensemble: Sarah Zaslav and Benjamin Reiss, violin; David Borthwick and Julia Borthwick, viola; Ruth Einstein, cello; Will Robertson, double bass

Speaker: Rabbi Joshua Lesser

Chorus director: Will Robertson

Music director: Gayanne Geurin

Cover art: Miriam Karp

Graphic design: Allison Carter

Liner notes: Sarah Zaslav

Licensing: Lynne Norton

Full Cold Moon was engineered by Will Robertson, recorded in Atlanta at Central Congregational United Church of Christ, St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church and Congregation Bet Haverim. Mixed and mastered by Will Robertson at Gallop Studios, Brookhaven, Georgia.

Tracks, Lyrics, and Music Notes

1. Eli, Eli (My God, My God)

Song by Hannah Szenes and David Zehavi.

Arranged for string duo by Sarah Zaslav. Used by permission.

Performed by Ruth Einstein, cello, and Sarah Zaslav, violin.

2. Earth Song

Words and music by Frank Ticheli.

Published by Manhattan Beach Music.

Sung by the Chorus of Congregation Bet Haverim.

Sing, Be, Live, See

This dark stormy hour
The wind, it stirs
The scorched earth
cries out in vain:

O war and power
You blind and blur
The torn heart
Cries out in pain

But music and singing
Have been my refuge
And music and singing
Shall be my light

A light of song
Shining strong: Alleluia!
Through darkness, pain and strife, I'll
Sing, Be Live, See . . .

Peace.

3. I Believe

Poem scratched in German on a wall during the Holocaust*. Music by Mark A. Miller.

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Sung by the Chorus of Congregation Bet Haverim, with Nefesh Chaya and Nancy Gerber, descant; Ellie McGraw, soprano solo; and Daniel Solberg, piano.

I believe in the sun
Even when it's not shining

I believe in love
Even when I don't feel it

I believe in God
Even when God is silent

*About the lyrics of "I Believe": We had seen conflicting stories about where this poem came from and sought scholarly help. On February 12, 2015, CBH member Lauren Rich received the following email from Ron Coleman of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in response to her query: "The earliest appearance of the poem that I have been able to find in a cursory search appears in Zvi Kolitz's 1947 book *The Tiger Beneath the Skin: Stories and Parables of the Years of Death* (New York: Creative Age Press, 1947; p. 81), where he attributes these lines to 'an inscription on the wall of a cellar in Cologne where a number of Jews hid themselves for the entire duration of the war.' The poem also appears in the 1976 *Anthology of Holocaust Literature* (New York: Atheneum, 1976; p. 340) with roughly the same attribution. Hilda Schiff includes the poem in the book *Holocaust Poetry* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 1995), where she says it was 'written on the wall of a cave in Cologne where Jews were hiding' (though she says it was translated from French). Many other sources I have seen also attribute it to an anonymous person in Cologne who was writing on a wall, although it is still possible that the entire story is apocryphal. Kolitz's book, though, might be the original published source (in English, at least). I cannot find an example of this poem (or something similar) prior to 1947, nor can I find any confirmation of when and where it was written. Other, less scholarly works attribute the poem to all sorts of people in various locations: a young girl in the Warsaw Ghetto; a boy in an unnamed concentration camp; an elderly Jewish man in Berlin; one story even suggests Frank Sinatra. Many other sources don't even bother with attribution."

4. Sing Me to Heaven

Words by Jane Griner. Music by Daniel E. Gawthrop.

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Sung by the Chorus of Congregation Bet Haverim.

In my heart's sequestered chambers lie truths stripped of poet's gloss
Words alone are vain and vacant, and my heart is mute
In response to aching silence memory summons half-heard voices
And my soul finds primal eloquence and wraps me in song

If you would comfort me, sing me a lullaby
If you would win my heart, sing me a love song
If you would mourn me and bring me to God
Sing me a requiem, sing me to heaven

Touch in me all love and passion, pain and pleasure
Touch in me grief and comfort; love and passion, pain and pleasure

Sing me a lullaby, a love song, a requiem
Love me, comfort me, bring me to God
Sing me a love song, sing me to heaven

5. Hashkiveinu Lullaby

Music by Will Robertson (choral original recorded on *Wheels Within Wheels*).

Arranged by David Borthwick. Used by permission.

Performed by the Congregation Bet Haverim String Ensemble.

6. When David Heard that Absalom Was Born

Poem written and read by Rabbi Joshua Lesser.

When David heard the news that Absalom was born,
He wept, "My son, my son."
He ran to the birthing room
And was struck by just how beautiful and how helpless this child was.
Quietly, King David let his eyes scour the boy until the fullness of his smile emerged.
His face shone like the full cold moon.
"Finally" he thought, "with this my third son, I can see my face reflected in his."

Then David began to sing, "My son, my son, Absalom, my son!"
Fatherly, he gathered him up into his arms, kissing the crown of his head.
He carried Absalom up into his chamber, over the gate.
By the starlight David held him up to the open window so tenderly but tight,
And whispered, "This kingdom is ours."
A raven crossed the night sky, dividing it in two, and landed on a nearby branch.
Startled, Absalom began to cry.

7. When David Heard (excerpt)

Words from 2 Samuel 19:1 (also cited as 2 Samuel 18:33). Music by Eric Whitacre.

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Sung by the Chorus of Congregation Bet Haverim.

When David heard that Absalom was slain
He went up into his chamber over the gate and wept
“My son, my son, O Absalom my son!”

8. Yikraeni (He Calls to Me)

Words from Psalms 91:15. Music by Will Robertson. Used by permission.

Sung by the Chorus of Congregation Bet Haverim.

Yikraeni ve'eneihu He calls to me; I answer him
Imo anochi vetzarahI am with him in times of trouble

9. Adonai Ro'i Lo Echsar (Adonai Is My Shepherd, I Shall Not Want)

Words from Psalms 23. Music by Gerald Cohen.

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Sung by the Chorus of Congregation Bet Haverim, with soprano trio Julie Fishman, Ellie McGraw and Faith Russler.

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| Adonai ro'i, lo echsar | Adonai is my shepherd; I shall not want |
| Binot deshe yarbitseini | God makes me lie down in green pastures |
| Al mei menuchot Yenahaleini | Beside still waters God leads me |

| | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Nafshi yeshoveiv | My soul God restores |
| Yancheini bemaglei tzedek | God leads me in righteous paths |
| Lema'an shemo | For the sake of God's name |

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Gam ki eilech | Even when I walk |
| Begei tzalmavet | Through the valley of the shadow of death |
| Lo ira ra | I fear no evil |
| Ki atah imadi | For you are with me |

| | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Shivtecha umishantecha | Your rod and your staff |
| Hemah yenachamuni | They comfort me |

| | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Ta'aroch lefanai | You prepare before me |
| Shulchan neged tsorerai | A table in front of my enemies |
| Dishanta vashemen roshi | You anoint my head with oil |
| Kosi revayah | My cup overflows |

| | |
|-------------------|------------------------------|
| Ach tov vachessed | Surely goodness and kindness |
| Yirdefuni | Will follow me |

kol yemei chayai All the days of my life
Veshavti beveit Adonai And I will dwell in the house of Adonai
Le'orech yamim For ever and ever

Adonai ro'i, lo echsar Adonai is my shepherd; I shall not want

10. Esa Einai (I Lift My Eyes)

Words from Psalm 121:1-2. Tune by Shlomo Carlebach.
Sung by Brad Davidorf and Gayanne Geurin.

Esa einai el heharim I lift my eyes up to the hills:
Me'ayin yavo ezri From where does my help come?

Ezri meim Adonai My help is from Adonai
Oseh shamayim va'aretz The maker of the heavens and the earth

11. Kiddush Levanah

(Blessing for the Renewing Moon)

Traditional Jewish prayer adapted and read by Rabbi Joshua Lesser.

Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech haolam asher bema'amaro bara shechakim, uv'ruach piv kol tzeva'am.

Blessed are you Adonai our God, sovereign of all space and eternity, who with spoken word created galaxies, and with divine breath all of their planets and constellations.

Chok uz'man natan lahem shelo yeshanu et tafkidam sasim us'mechim la'asot ratzon konam, poel emet, shepe'ulato emet.

The Creator of All gifted them with the cycles of time, so they would not veer from their path, joyful and happy to do the will of the One who fashioned them, Truth-Worker whose work is true.

Velalevanah amar shetichadesh. Ateret tiferet la'amusei baten, shehem atidim lehitchadesh kemotah, ulefa'er liyotzram al shem kevod malchuto

The Creator of All said to the moon, "Renew yourself!" The moon is a crown of beauty to all those who were ever born from the womb, and they will be called to renew themselves like her, and to glorify the One who shaped them, in the name of glory of the Divine realm.

Baruch atah Adonai mechadesh chodashim

Blessed be You, Adonai, who restores the renewing-moons.

Shalom Aleichem! Aleichem shalom!

Peace unto you! Unto you peace

Siman tov umazel tov yehei lanu udechol Yisrael. Amen.

A good omen and a good sign for us and for all Israel. Amen.

12. Hineh Mah Tov (Behold, How Good)

Words from Psalm 133:1. Music by Leonard Bernstein from *Chichester Psalms*.
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Bernstein Music Publishing Company LLC. Boosey & Hawkes, Inc., sole agent.
Sung by the Chorus of Congregation Bet Haverim.

Hineh mah tov Umah na'im Shevet achim Gam yachad

Behold how good And pleasant it is When people dwell Together in unity

13. Eli, Eli — Halicha L'Kesariya (My God, My God—Journey to Cesarea)

Words by Hannah Szenes. Music by David Zehavi.
Arranged by Will Robertson. Used by permission.
Sung by the Chorus of Congregation Bet Haverim.

Eli, Eli, Shelo yigamer le'olam:
Hachol vehayam, Rishrush shel hamayim
Berak hashamayim, T'filat ha'adam

My God, My God, I pray that these things never end
The sand and the sea, The rush of the waters
The crash of the heavens, The prayer of the heart