Commemorating all those lost to gun violence and seeking to inspire unity and peace.

Friday, November 17, 2017 | 7:30 P.M.
James Memorial Chapel
Union Theological Seminary

In partnership with Sandy Hook Promise
Welcome
It is with great joy that we welcome you to Inspire’s inaugural concert. Given the nature of the program, perhaps joy is the wrong word to use. After all, how can joy persist in the wake of the senseless loss that results from gun violence? Nevertheless, to us your presence here tonight is a testament to the insistence of hope in the face of tremendous sorrow and an expression of the willingness to engage in efforts aimed at creating a brighter future. In this way, we find joy in the opportunity to share our voices with you as we amplify the vital work of Sandy Hook Promise.

Inspire seeks to empower, inform, and enrich communities. Our hope is to foster an enduring spirit of community engagement uplifted through song; a goal that is impossible without generous supporters such as you. Thank you for becoming part of this vision.

About the Program
Our concert tonight takes its name from a poem, read in parts throughout the program, which references the school shooting at Sandy Hook, the shooting of Trayvon Martin, and the theater shooting in Aurora, Colorado. Sadly, each of these tragedies—unique though they are in their impact on those directly affected—are part of an epidemic of gun violence in the United States. The daily death toll is staggering. We are so beleaguered with news of tragedy after tragedy that it can be overwhelming. We here have all experienced these events differently, yet we come together tonight to unite our spirits in grief, in pain, and in mourning—and also in search of comfort, peace, and even hope.

The program seeks to guide us—singers and listeners together—through the spectrum of emotions. One of our goals is to recontextualize familiar music and words. As such, this diverse program includes spirituals, a song of unrequited love, texts sacred and secular, ancient and modern. Each piece carries its own meaning, but we too bring our own meanings to the hearing, and, together, these pieces take on new purpose as part of a larger tapestry woven of those collective messages, interpretations, and interactions.

Of special note, this concert features the world premiere of three arrangements by members of Inspire. Two are reimaginings of old standards; the third is an arrangement of a song by the Rev. Dr. James Forbes, Senior Minister Emeritus at The Riverside Church (across the street). Rev. Forbes began writing “Sound out of the Ground” in response to the tragedy at Sandy Hook and continued to add verses in response to other incidents of gun violence. He set his poem to an original melody, and we are honored to share it in this choral arrangement.

The late Pierre Boulez said, “One should essentially see concerts as a means of communication, as animated contact between participants, be they listeners or creators.” In that spirit, we invite you to light a candle in memory of anyone lost to gun violence during the singing of “Da Pacem Domine.” And at the end of “Amazing Grace,” we encourage you to join your voices with ours for the final three verses in communal hope that “grace will lead us home.”
Inaugural Concert

DON’T SHOOT, JUST LISTEN

Please silence all electronic devices
and hold applause until the program concludes.

I. “26 will never sing”
Motherless Child     arr. Craig Hella Johnson (b. 1962)
Tuesday Rupp, Rebecca Luttio, Carrie Quarquesso, soloists
Ov’é Lass’, Il Bel Viso?
Morten Lauridsen (b. 1943)
Sound out of the Ground
James Forbes (b. 1935)
arr. Ari Messenger* (b. 1993)
Zana Thaqi, mezzo soprano

II. “1 will never sing”
Nunc Dimittis
Pawel Łukaszewski (b. 1968)
Da Pacem Domine
Arvo Pärt (b. 1935)
All are invited to light a candle in memory of those lost to gun violence.
Only in Sleep
Christina Kershaw, soprano
Ériks Ešenvalds (b. 1977)

III. “12 will never sing”
In Remembrance
Eleanor Daley (b. 1955)
There Will Be Rest
Frank Ticheli (b. 1958)

IV. “Grace will lead us home.”
Down in the River to Pray
Miguel Saucedo, tenor
arr. Jon Pohlmann* (b. 1951)
Hark, I Hear the Harps Eternal
arr. Alice Parker (b. 1925)
Amazing Grace
arr. Unknown & Ryan Buchanan* (b. 1992)

Please join in singing when invited:

Yea, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess, within the veil,
A life of joy and peace
When we’ve been there ten thousand years
Bright shining as the sun,
We’ve no less days to sing God’s praise
Than when we’d first begun.
Amazing grace!
How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.

*member of Inspire

All are welcome to a reception following the concert.
I. “26 will never sing”

Motherless Child
Sometimes I feel like a motherless child—
a long way from home.
Sometimes I feel like I got no friends—
a long way from home.
Sometimes I feel like I’m almost home—
a long way from home.

Ov’é Lass’, Il Bel Viso?
Where, alas, is the beautiful face? Behold, it hides.
Woe is me, where is my sun?
Alas, what veil drapes itself and renders the heavens dark?
Woe is me, that I call and see it; it does not respond.
Oh, if your sails have auspicious winds.
My dearest sweet, and if you change your hair and features late,
If the Lord of Delos hides grace and valor in your beautiful bosom,
Hear my sighs and give them place to turn unjust disdain into love,
And may your pity conquer hardships.
See how I burn and how I am consumed by fire;
What better reason, what greater sign
Than I, a temple of faithful life and love!

Sound out of the Ground
Cain murdered and buried his brother.
No one knew Abel’s blood had been shed.
Out of the ground came a mournful sound:
Abel’s blood crying out in his stead.

Our precious young children of Newtown
Asked us all for this one sacrifice.
“Grieve our demise with eyes on the prize.
Save the children; our blood paid the price.”

Refrain:
What is that sound coming out of the ground?
It’s the blood of our fallen children.
What is their crying trying to say?
We’ve got to stop this senseless killing.

Young brothers died asking this question:
“Must we fall so that you can feel tall?”
When we can see we’re one family,
Life will be so much better for all.

The blood in our veins should be crying
With the blood that’s still crying today.
Rise above fear, speak out loud and clear!
For our children, put weapons away!
II. “1 will never sing”

Nunc Dimittis  
Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace  
According to thy word.  
For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,  
Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people;  
To be a light to lighten the Gentiles and to be the glory of thy people Israel.

Da Pacem Domine  
Give peace, O Lord, in our time.  
For there is none other  
Who would fight for us  
If not you, our God.

All are invited to light a candle in memory of those lost to gun violence.

III. “12 will never sing”

In Remembrance  
Do not stand at my grave and weep.  
I am not there, I do not sleep.  
I am a thousand winds that blow,  
I am the diamond glint on snow.  
I am the sunlight-ripened grain,  
I am the gentle morning rain.  
And when you wake in the morning’s hush,  
I am the sweet uplifting rush of quiet birds in circled flight.  
I am the soft stars that shine at night.  
Do not stand at my grave and cry,  
I am not there, I did not die.

There Will Be Rest  
There will be rest, and sure stars shining  
Over the rooftops crowned with snow.  
A reign of rest, serene forgetting,  
The music of stillness, holy and low.  
I will make this world of my devising  
Out of a dream in my lonely mind.  
I shall find the crystal of peace; and above me  
Stars I shall find.
**Down in the River to Pray**

Traditional

As I went down to the river to pray,
Studying about that good old way,
And who shall wear the robe and crown,
Good Lord, show me the way.

Oh, sisters...
Oh, brothers...
Oh, fathers...
Oh, mothers...
Oh, sinners...
...let's go down in the river to pray.

**Hark, I Hear the Harps Eternal**

attr. F. R. Warren

Hark, I hear the harps eternal ringing on the farther shore,
As I near those swollen waters with their deep and solemn roar.
Hallelujah! Praise the Lamb. Glory to the great I Am.

And my soul though stained with sorrow, fading as the light of day,
Passes swiftly o'er those waters to the city far away.
Hallelujah! Praise the Lamb. Glory to the great I Am.

Souls have crossed before me saintly to that land of perfect rest,
And I hear them singing faintly in the mansions of the blest.
Hallelujah! Praise the Lamb. Glory to the great I Am.

**Amazing Grace**

John Newton

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.

’Twas Grace that taught my heart to fear,
And Grace my fears relieved.
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils, and snares
I have already come.
’Twas grace that brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me.
His word my hope secures.
It will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures.

*Please join in the final verses:*

Yea, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess, within the veil,
A life of joy and peace

When we’ve been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We’ve no less days to sing God’s praise
Than when we’d first begun.

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost but now am found.
Was blind, but now I see.
Artists

Joshua Alexander  Tegan Miller
Kate Bullock     Caroline Pohlmann
Ryan Buchanan    Jon Pohlmann
Erin Halpin      Carrie Quarquesso
Julia Hamilton   Rebecca Luttio
Justin Jalea     Tuesday Rupp
Ben Keiper       Miguel Saucedo
Christina Kershaw Michael Sauter
Eleanor Killiam  James Knox Sutterfield
Bennet Mahler    Zana Thaqi
Claire Manganiello Lindsey Weishaus
Tom Marks        Abaigh Wheatley
Ari Messenger

with:
David Rodgers, actor
Alana Murphy, piano

Board of Directors
Katherine Austin-Evelyn, Chair
Tuesday Rupp, Singer Liaison & Secretary
Megan Chartrand, Executive Director & Treasurer
Justin Jalea, Artistic Director

Erin Halpin, Associate Conductor
James Knox Sutterfield, Associate Artistic Director
Claire Manganiello & Erin Halpin, Digital Design
Eleanor Killiam, Artist Coordinator
Lindsey Weishaus, Public Relations
Tegan Miller, Wardrobe Coordinator
Susan Pohlmann, Reception Coordinator
Julia Hamilton & Ryan Buchanan, Education Team

In partnership with:

Sandy Hook Promise
sandyhookpromise.org

and

Union Theological Seminary
Inspire is a New York City-based chamber choir dedicated to cultivating compassion and action for diverse social issues through the power of song. In partnership with organizations seeking positive social change, we encourage individual and collective action on socially pressing issues. We seek to inspire a spirit of unity among our artists, audiences, and wider community.

Inspire seeks to promote unity through the power of song. We are dedicated to fostering a more just society by championing the work of our community partners, encouraging audience engagement, and cultivating impassioned and excellent artistry.

Sandy Hook Promise is a national non-profit organization founded and led by several family members whose loved ones were killed at Sandy Hook Elementary School on December 14, 2012.

Based in Newtown, Connecticut, their intent is to honor all victims of gun violence by turning their tragedy into a moment of transformation by providing programs and practices that protect children and prevent the senseless, tragic loss of life. More information at www.sandyhookpromise.org.

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John Halpin
Jennifer Hobbs
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Marie-Josée Lapierre
Kristi Roosmaa Tootell
Jackie Sauter
Erin Smith
James Knox Sutterfield
Timothy Takach
Ann Mac Vicar
Nathaniel Widelitz

Upcoming Concerts
Earth, Teach Me
March 16, 2018, 7:30 PM
Society for Ethical Culture
2 W 64th Street

Voice Dance
June 8, 2018, 7:30 PM
The Center at West Park
165 W 86th Street