



**DATELINE: March 23, 2023  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contacts:

Da Camera Singers, Sheila Heffernon, Artistic Director. [heffernon@gmail.com](mailto:heffernon@gmail.com)  
Mark G. Auerbach Public Relations. 413-427-7352 or [mgauerbach@gmail.com](mailto:mgauerbach@gmail.com)

**DA CAMERA SINGERS PRESENTS LESLÉA NEWMAN IN “HE CONTINUES TO  
MAKE A DIFFERENCE: THE STORY OF MATTHEW SHEPARD” ON APRIL 22**

Da Camera Singers, the adult chamber choir located in the Pioneer Valley, is sponsoring a presentation by Lesléa Newman, “He Continues to Make a Difference: The Story of Matthew Shepard,” on Saturday, April 22 at 2 PM in the auditorium at Amherst-Pelham Regional High School, 170 Chestnut St., Amherst, MA. This presentation is open to all and is free of charge. This presentation precedes a performance of Craig Hella Johnson’s choral work, *Considering Matthew Shepard*, which will be performed by Da Camera on May 21 at 4PM, at Greenfield High School. *Considering Matthew Shepard’s* libretto features seven poems written by Lesléa Newman, poems written by William Blake, Rumi, Hildegard of Bingen, as well as personal journal entries by Matt himself.

In 1998, Matthew Shepard was kidnapped, robbed, beaten, and murdered in Laramie, Wyoming. Lesléa Newman was the keynote speaker for Gay Awareness Week at the University of Wyoming that year, and arrived on campus the day that Matthew Shepard died from this horrendous hate crime. She spoke to a devastated campus and community, and vowed to work to erase hate from that day forward. This program uses poetry, photographs, and creative visualization to explore the impact of Matthew Shepard’s murder on the world.

Lesléa Newman has created 80 books for readers of all ages including the novel-in-verse, *October Mourning: A Song for Matthew Shepard*, the short story collection, *A Letter to Harvey Milk*, the dual memoir-in-verse, *I Carry My Mother and I Wish My Father* and the picture books *Sparkle Boy*, *The Fairest in the Land*, *I Can Be....ME!*, *The Babka Sisters* and *Heather Has Two Mommies*. Her literary awards include poetry fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Massachusetts Artists Foundation, two National Jewish Book Awards, the Sydney Taylor Body-of-Work Award, two American Library Association Stonewall Honors, and the Massachusetts Book Award. Newman's book, *Always Matt: A Tribute to Matthew Shepard* will be published by Abrams ComicArts this fall, to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the creation of the Matthew Shepard Foundation. For further information on Lesléa Newman : <https://lesleanewman.com/>

For further information on Da Camera: visit: [dacamerasingers.org](http://dacamerasingers.org) or on Facebook at Da Camera Singers



Photo. Lesléa Newman Photo by PLYNN Gutman

