



A conversation with Charlotte Gordon
Author of *The Woman Who Named God:*
Abraham's Dilemma and the Birth of Three Faiths
Saturday, March 27, 1pm
St Barnabas Episcopal Church
91 Main Street, Falmouth MA 02543
508-548-3863



The public is invited to an author talk and book-signing with **Charlotte Gordon** at **1pm** on **Saturday, March 27**, at **St Barnabas Episcopal Church** in **Falmouth**.

Ms Gordon's latest book, *The Woman Who Named God* is a retelling of the saga of Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar: the tale of origin for three great Western monotheistic faiths. Abraham must choose between two wives who have borne him two sons. One wife and son will share in his wealth and status, while the other two are exiled into the desert. Long a cornerstone of Western anxiety, the story chronicles a very famous and troubled family, and sheds light on the ongoing conflict between the Judeo-Christian and Islamic worlds.

How did this ancient story become one of the least understood and most frequently misinterpreted of our cultural myths? Gordon explores this legendary love triangle to give us a startling perspective on three biblical characters who - with their jealousies, passions, and doubts - actually behave like human beings.

Gordon's visit to Falmouth is just before the start of Judaism's celebration of Passover and Christianity's Holy Week leading to Easter: an appropriate time for reflecting on the origins of both faiths in light of each other and their sister religion of Islam.

The event is sponsored by the Cape & Islands Deanery of Episcopal churches on the Cape & Islands (www.capeislandsdeanery.org) and is open to all.

Information: communications@stbarnabasfalmouth.org or deanerynews@capeislandsdeanery.org

Press Photos (Hi Resolution jpg):

Gordon: http://capeislandsdeanery.org/newsroom/GordonCharlottePhoto_HiRes.jpg

Book cover: http://capeislandsdeanery.org/newsroom/Gordon_WomanNameGod_HiRes.jpg

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About the Book

The Woman Who Named God is a compelling, smart, and provocative take on one of the Bible's most intriguing and troubling love stories. It has received strong reviews across the country including in the Library Journal, Kirkus and Publisher's Weekly.

Elie Wiesel, Nobel Laureate and professor at Boston University, says, "Gordon's exploration of an ancient Biblical tale is insightful, enriching, and rewarding."

Rabbi Arthur Waskow, director of The Shalom Center and co-author of *The Tent of Abraham*, says, “The story of Hagar, Abraham’s wife along with Sarah, is often set aside by Jews and Christians — perhaps out of guilt or shame over what looks like Abraham’s and Sarah’s mistreatment of her. In Islam, she has a central role in the pilgrimage to Mecca, and in other ways. So she has become a sign of separation between the Abrahamic peoples, rather than of community. This book is a signal step forward to give us all the fullness of her story, her family, her connection with God. May it help us all connect!”

Frank Schaeffer, the author of *Crazy for God* and *Keeping Faith*, writes, “This is a brilliant book that weaves history, archeology, myth, time and place into a larger-than-life (and all-too human) story of sin, lust, betrayal and blessing. It did for me what tedious years of Sunday school never accomplished: stripped away the veil of opaque religiosity and cast the heart of the biblical narrative into sharp—and entertaining—relief.”

About the Author

Gordon received an undergraduate degree in English and American Literature from Harvard University and a PhD from Boston University. A post-doctoral fellow at Boston University, she taught Religion and Literature in the Department of Theology and from 1999-2002 was a lecturer in Elie Wiesel’s seminars, *The Literature of Memory*.

Since 1986, Gordon has taught creative writing, history, literature, religion, and theater at both the college and secondary school level. From 1992-2002 she was the Director of the Writing Program at The Waring School in Beverly, MA. She currently teaches at Endicott College in Beverly, MA and conducts writing workshops for adults from her home in Gloucester, MA.

Author’s website: www.charlottegordonbooks.com

More Reviews of *The Woman Who Named God*

“Gordon offers a unique look at the Old Testament relationships between and among Abraham; his wife, Sarah; and his mistress, Hagar. Gordon approaches the biblical text as a literary study as opposed to a literal divine revelation. With no theological ax to grind, she draws upon the work of theologians, scholars, archaeologists, and historians to unpack a widely misunderstood and misinterpreted saga. Most interesting is her focus on the exiled, shamed, and shadowed Hagar, whom Gordon elevates to a mystic and prophet. Gordon ultimately shows that these biblical characters are complex and multilayered; they behave, in short, like human beings who wrestle with foibles, passions, and jealousies. Most important, the story speaks to the 21st century and its marital ambivalence, dysfunctional family systems, pervasive divorce, as well as to 9/11, the so-called "Axis of Evil," and West Bank unrest. The author's vision is that the retelling of this ancient tale might awaken the world to redemption. The sons of Hagar and Sarah, after all, came together in peace at their father Abraham's funeral. General readers with even a casual interest in religion and its impact on history, as well as on current events, will appreciate the lens through which the author peers.-C. Brian Smith, Arlington Heights Memorial Lib., IL” —Library Journal

“The story of Abraham, Hagar and Sarah stands at the threshold of the three great Western religions—Christianity, Judaism, Islam—although each appropriates the story differently. Gordon gives new power to a woman often left in the shadows...glimpses of the power of Hagar’s story for modern religions.” - Publishers Weekly