



THE ALLIANCE ALERT

May-June 2022

**The Women's Alliance of the
Unitarian Church of All Souls, Inc.**



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Christine Goodwin

Time to put away the heavy winter coats, turtleneck sweaters, hats and gloves....the ubiquitous (love that word) Callery pear trees are in bloom, daffodils and tulips popping up. I think some spring cleaning may be in order for me. It was wonderful to see so many WA members in person (and on Zoom) for our Spring Event on Saturday, April 2nd, with Janice P. Nimura's fascinating account of the pioneering Blackwell sisters, who, as doctors in the mid 1800s, were so influential in medical advances. Thanks to many of you who made this event happen.



Special thanks to Alynne Wesson for contacting our speaker, Janice Nimura, and ordering copies of her book. Thanks also to:

- Maureen Marwick and Sumi Kubota for the colorful Spring decor and flowers
- Joyce Elderfield and Jean Lotz for delicious light refreshments
- Anne Bradley for her computer which allowed us to Zoom the meeting
- Barbara Reed for greeting everyone and providing name tags
- Susan Hoehn for photography

Thanks to many who brought sweets and baked goods and helped with set up: Jane Levenson, Gerda Artes, Colette Markey, Sarah Dowson, Linda Floyd, Sandy Gallett, Mary Geissman, Marilyn Reagan, and Winnie Olsen.

I hope I haven't forgotten anyone!

Not only was the talk very interesting, but we could socialize in person and make new connections. It was a great turnout with not only WA members, but folks from the All Souls community as well as the wider neighborhood who were alerted to the event through social media, which we should explore going forward.

Despite the recent uptick in Covid cases due to yet another Covid variant, people are out and about, attending concerts and theater and even traveling. I hope that this continues and that the Women's Alliance will continue to be a source of inspiration.

Even as we welcome the season of rebirth, spring and Easter, we have recently suffered losses and setbacks in our WA group and the wider community. They remind me to cherish every day and not take little blessings for granted.

I wish you all a happy summer and hope to be together again soon.

WOMEN'S ALLIANCE UPCOMING EVENTS

Daily through May 8, 12-5 p.m.

"Nature as Sanctuary" at Church of the Heavenly Rest, Fifth Avenue at 90th Street

The Sierra Photo NYC exhibit includes work by Women's Alliance member Julie Wosk. She is one of the photographers who present images of special places they have chosen as sanctuaries, places of refuge and peace found in natural environments. Julie's photograph, seen here, was one of the first to be sold, but there is still time to see it at the exhibit.



Wednesday, May 4, 1 p.m.

Music Special Interest Group (SIG) at Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center

This program of the "Wednesdays at One" concert series features chamber music performed by the gifted students of the Juilliard Pre-College. More information about meeting up with other WA members to come via emails from Christine Goodwin. Free, no ticket required.

Monday, May 9, 11:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Ikebana, the Japanese Art of Flower Arranging

Our May membership meeting will be held in person in Reidy Friendship Hall and livestreamed on Zoom. Lunch (BYO) and business meeting, followed by program and socializing. We'll provide coffee, tea and a sweet. WA members Sumi Kubota and Heli R.-F. Blum, who have studied Ikebana in Japan, will start with a look into the history and space Ikebana inhabits in Japanese culture and then follow with a demonstration of arrangements in the Sogetsu school of Ikebana. You will leave with a small pamphlet with schematics of the arrangements to try at home.

Thursday, May 12, 11 a.m.

Little Island on the Hudson River at West 14th Street

Little Island is an intriguing architectural design that engages people with one another and with its magnificent natural and NYC surroundings. At the highest points are great views of New Jersey, Downtown Manhattan and the Hudson River to the Verrazano Bridge. Little Island has cement walks that are gentle slopes, moderate inclines, and also has stairs. We'll take a leisurely walk up, down and all around to see everything, sit on benches and enjoy the scenery. Restrooms and refreshments are available.



Meet Sarah Dowson, host for this portion of the outing, at the West 14th Street entrance at 11 a.m. To get there, cross West Side Highway and look left. Lunch at 1:30 p.m. at Cookstop, a greenmarket-driven hotspot by the High Line at 156 10th Ave. @ 20th Street. Alix Hall will host. Reservations are limited to 12. Registrar for this outing is Sandra Fisher, Outings Chair, at sfisher535@aol.com, 646-675-3608, and your reservation for the restaurant is due by noon on Tuesday, May 10th. Attendance for Little Island is unlimited.

Con't ...

Con't ...

Tuesday, June 7, 11 a.m.

Brooklyn Botanical Gardens to see the Blooming Roses!



If it rains, we will visit the Brooklyn Museum, which is adjacent to the BBG. Meet at 11 a.m. at the BBG entrance by the parking lot.

Leader and registrar: Susan Hoehn, Mshnyc50@gmail.com, 347-752-8562.
Lunch at the BBG Café.

Monday, June 13, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Bigs & Littles NYC Mentoring

Our June membership meeting will be held in-person in Reidy Friendship Hall and livestreamed on Zoom. Lunch (BYO) and business meeting, followed by program and socializing. We'll provide coffee, tea and a sweet. Bigs & Littles NYC Mentoring strives to transform the lives of children through one-to-one mentoring, while strengthening entire families in hardship. We will hear more about this pioneering, 120-year-old program from Bigs & Littles' Chief Executive Officer Vidhya Kelly, and Chief Program Director Susan Varghese.

Tuesdays, June 14-August 2, 7:30-9 p.m.

Naumburg Orchestral Concert Summer Series

Join WA's Music Special Interest Group (Music SIG) to attend outdoor classical music concerts by promising new talent at Central Park's Naumburg Bandshell. Seating on the Concert Ground is available on a first-come-first-service basis. More information about meeting up with other WA members to come via emails from Christine Goodwin. Free, no ticket required.

<https://naumburgconcerts.org/upcoming>

June 14 — The Knights orchestral group plays sonatas by Beethoven, Janáček, and more.

June 28 — Handel and Haydn Society plays concerti by Corelli, Vivaldi, Handel and more.

July 12 — A Far Cry orchestral group plays lullabies by Bartók, Beethoven, Dvořák and more.

July 26 — The Knights play Dorman's "Nigunim," Mendelssohn's "Scottish" Symphony No. 3 and more.

August 2 — ECCO-East Coast Chamber Orchestra plays Schubert's "Death and the Maiden" and more.

Women's Reading Group (SIG)

Second Tuesday of Each Month, 7:00 p.m. on Zoom

May 10: *Girl, Women, Other*, Bernadine Evaristo

June 14: *Family Lexicon*, Natalia Ginzburg

For more information, contact: christina.black50@gmail.com

No additional membership meetings or outings are (as yet) planned for July and August.

DIRECT AID TO UKRAINIAN REFUGEES

WA Member & IWC Leader Carol Huston is Involved With Emergency Action

By the Rev. Carol Huston

As Russia's invasion of Ukraine began and refugees poured into Eastern European countries, Zsafia Sztranyiczki, executive director of International Women's Convocation (IWC), a global partnership of Unitarians & Unitarian Universalists, reached out to our Unitarian churches and women's associations in Transylvania to see if IWC could provide support. Kolishvar (Cluj), the location of our largest church in Romania, would receive refugees and Providence, the social justice arm of the Hungarian Unitarian Church, was ready to manage projects. On February 26, two days after the invasion began, IWC launched a Faithify campaign, which raised \$111,872 by mid-April from UU organizations and individual donors. That campaign is now closed but you can donate to a new Faithify campaign through May 27 by using this link: <https://www.faithify.org/campaign/67/support-those-fleeing-war-in-ukraine>.

So far, the UU contributions have supported refugees in Cluj with housing, meals, and other necessities. Providence has opened a kindergarten with qualified teachers from Ukraine in the Unitarian Church in Cluj, and has organized a Ukrainian Youth Club for teenage refugees. It has also moved food and medical supplies into Transcarpathia (the Hungarian-speaking area in southwestern Ukraine) and Odessa.

As a past president and ongoing committee chair for IWC, I have worked with women in Transylvania for more than 10 years. It is gratifying to know that we can quickly translate this relationship into emergency action.



LOUISA LEE SCHUYLER

The Second in a Series About Women of All Souls Not Honored in the Sanctuary

By Laura Pedersen

A highlight of the sanctuary tour is the large Augustus Saint-Gaudens memorial to Henry Whitney Bellows, who served as minister for over four decades (from 1839 to 1882). Noted on it is one of his largest accomplishments: Planner and president of the United States Sanitary Commission, the leading soldiers' aid society during the Civil War. The USSC became the largest and most effective organization dedicated to supporting the health and efficiency of the Union Army, and a forerunner to the Red Cross.



Yet, that endeavor was started by the women of All Souls. They needed a man to lead it so that he could meet with other like-minded leaders and travel to Washington, D.C. to liaise with the government. The women certainly chose wisely, but it was church members like Louisa Lee Schuyler behind those efforts. I've been thinking a lot of Louisa Lee Schuyler during the pandemic because she also founded the first nursing school in the country, in connection with Bellevue Hospital.

ON THE ROAD AGAIN

WA Members Are Getting Away

Adrianne Navon

I'm gradually revamping travel plans laid aside when Covid emerged and the world situation shifted. After an epic journey through open-heart surgery at NYU last September, I'm healing well and inching back into safe mini-expeditions. In March I drove to a beloved Quaker retreat center outside Philadelphia for a peaceful and gratifying two-day sojourn. At the end of April I'm taking Amtrak to Washington D.C. to see the ballet "Giselle" (Alas, Covid had cancelled my 2020 plans to see Washington Ballet's premier of "Swan Lake"). On April 20, I happily joined the WA for an excellent excursion to new installations on Roosevelt Island. I'm discovering splendid tourist sites right here in my own city! To avoid the uncertainties of international travel, my June Baltic cruise from Copenhagen to St. Petersburg will become an easy sailing out of Manhattan toward Halifax in September. (Norwegian Cruise Line has been very accommodating.)

As I approach age 80 and explore the possibilities of life with a repaired heart, it's great to be alive.

Susan Hoehn & Gerda Artes

Here is a photo of us as part of the view of Toledo. The original El Greco "view" is in the Met. We flew to Madeira, then to Portugal where we cruised on the Douro River before heading to Spain. In Spain we toured Salamanca, Toledo, and Madrid. We were very lucky and had perfect travel weather the whole time (18 days). We felt very safe. The locals were very proud of their vaccination results. Masks had to be worn indoors everywhere, though many people—especially schoolchildren—also wore them outdoors. We needed proof of vaccination and negative tests before getting on our flights. For our return test our Madrid hotel set up a testing site at the hotel. We got our "negative" certificates the next day and needed this to get on the plane.



We are so glad we took this chance. This was before the nasty Omicron version shut us up again. We both hope the future will bring more travel, but who knows what will happen.

Sandra Lotz Fisher

Upcoming travels include:

- New Orleans Jazz Festival 4/25-5/2.
- Scotland: Walking in Argyll and the Isles with Wilderness Scotland and a Workshop of Sacred Music, Song and Dance at Findhorn 7/7-7/30.
- Then off to my beloved Norway to see my friends in Oslo until 8/15.

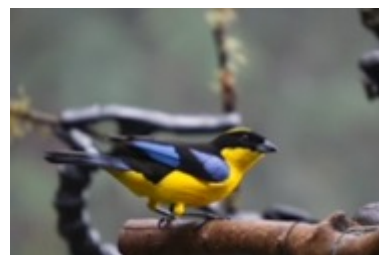
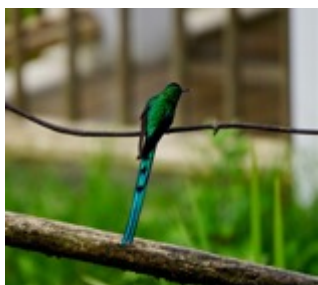
Anne Brewer

Anne shared these photos from a recent trip to Portugal:



Christina Black

I spent a week in Colombia in mid-March with a small group from New York. The focus was birdwatching, which we did about 10-12 hours per day! We were traveling between Cali and Manizales in the Cauca Valley, but spent most of the time up in the Western then Central Andes, getting as high as 14,000 feet in Los Nevados National Park. The country and people are beautiful and it was certainly wonderful to be away. While vacation is always pleasurable, as is birding in such exceptional and unparalleled habitats, it was also comforting to spend such concentrated time in the company of other people after so much isolation. Previous 2020-21 trips, during COVID, have been lovely (California, Florida, Delaware shore, etc), but immersing in a new culture was especially refreshing and the travel itself was easy. Where to next? Iceland in June. More photos can be found on Instagram at @ChristyNoir.



From left: Long-tailed Sylph, friendly Shining Sunbeam Hummingbird, Manizales church and Blue-winged Mountain Tanager

Mary Geissman

I have travelled some within the United States.

- July 2021 — I flew to San Francisco to visit and stay with my best friend in Oakland for three weeks. While I was there, her daughter drove us to Mendocino and the three of us stayed there for a week at the Mendocino Hotel.
- Christmas 2021 — I flew to Milwaukee to spend Christmas with my sister and her family in Grafton. I stayed at the Stagecoach Inn in Cedarburg, a nearby town.
- April 2022 — I returned to Wisconsin for my sister's 80th birthday party.

I may travel to France at the end of August — good friends are planning a big celebration at their home in Sancerre, and I would like to go, combining this with time in Paris.

Karen Steele

Karen Steele has two trips planned: in May she will visit her son in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and hopes to explore Bandelier National Monument (her son's photo here) among other national parks. In June, she will be among the All Souls delegates at the UUA's General Assembly (GA) in Portland, Oregon, June 22-26. She is part of the GA planning team for the national UUJME (Unitarian Universalists for Justice in the Middle East). Karen encourages all members of WA to attend GA — either online or in person. It is a wonderful opportunity to learn more about Unitarian Universalism and to meet UUs across the country. Register at <https://www.uua.org/ga>.



Linda Becker

My February trip to Baja Mexico fulfilled a dream I held for the last 20 years. That dream was to be up-close and personal with a whale in its natural habitat. Road Scholar (RS) made my dream come true. Our small group of 16 American travelers CA, CO, FL, TX, TN, WY, NY, all had one goal, "Let's meet the whales!"

We gathered in San Diego where RS provided an educational day at the world famous Scripps Institution of Oceanography. There a scientist taught us important details about the Gray Whales, whose company we sought. The next morning our RS guides escorted us across the Mexican border at Tijuana. From that point our journey became many days of driving 530 miles to our destination, the Lagoons. With our excellent Mexican guides and bus driver, we traversed the Baja Peninsula via Mexico Highway One, a narrow two lane, but the only paved road south. The desert countryside was remote, desolate, almost unpopulated. RS planned stops each night at small hotels usually surrounded by just more desert, but serving us delicious Mexican fare. (These were not luxurious resorts by any stretch of imagination.) Next morning up and out by 7 a.m. to continue driving. Along the way we made stops to stretch our legs with desert walks and time to learn about the many cactus varieties we saw. We were in a "third-world-country" experience. No internet, no telephone, no TV — even the electricity and bathroom facilities were questionable at times. All this in pursuit of our goal. No one complained. After days of driving we arrived at the Lagoons.

We were rewarded! We spent three days boating in the waters where the Gray Whales come each year



to mate and give birth. I dubbed the activities "Whales' Spring Break!" Each morning we went out in two tiny wooden rowboats, each with a large motor attached. Our captain, who was employed by the whale watch company, ran the motor and knew his way around the Lagoon. Far out on the waters, with no land in sight, our boat would then be approached by inquisitive and friendly whales. The whales knew the drill — the Lagoon is part of their yearly migration from the cold northern climates, and by now these whales are used

to humans coming to ohh and ahh at their sight. The whales (more than one at a time) would come right up to our boat for petting, as depicted in the photo above. The size of the Gray Whale is bigger than the size of our small boat. They surrounded us and were careful not to tip us. The first time a whale came right next to me and we were eye-to-eye was a truly magical feeling. One whale seemed to like our squeals of delight and started playing with us. He sprayed mist from his blowhole right into my mouth! Wow that was a surprise! Thanks to the Scripps scientist, we knew how to spot "mating in progress," and so we witnessed the actual act. Our captain said he drove the boats for 26 years and had never seen that in action. We were so lucky!

The drive back to the U.S. border seemed to go faster now that my dream had been realized. As I looked out at the landscape I started to appreciate the desert and rolling hills covered in all manner of interesting cactus and plants. Our last night in Mexico was spent at a lovely resort hotel near the border. We celebrated new friendships with music and tequila. The next day our RS guides made sure our passage into the U.S. was smooth and easy.

This was an exhausting trip, and not for the faint-hearted! But most of all, what happened at the Lagoons was a once-in-a-lifetime experience. I loved my time there.

OUR OWN MARY-ELLA IS HONORED



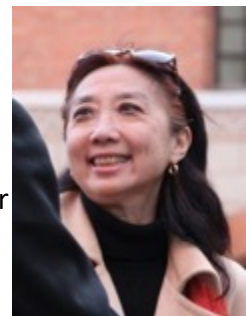
The Annie Eaton Society, which supports the charitable social outreach carried out by the women of All Souls, honored Mary-Ella Holst, who has served many leadership roles in the Women's Alliance. AES managers Winnie Olsen and Linda Moskin, seen here at left and right behind Mary-Ella, attended the April event with Mary-Ella's husband Guy, seated at the table, and daughters Trish and Darcy. Winnie and Linda, who are also members of the WA, presented Mary-Ella with flowers and a specially created framed certificate that states:

As a long-standing member of the Society, Mary-Ella has made significant contributions in a multitude of ways including: her commitment to the achievement of the Society's mission, her invaluable leadership in guiding and carrying out the Society's administrative responsibilities, and her meticulousness to ensure Society documents are properly archived for posterity. We celebrate her many contributions, which have strengthened and sustained the Society over several decades!



REMEMBERING JUDY CHANG

We were brokenhearted to learn about the unexpected death in March of Judy Chang, new member of the Women's Alliance, past president of the Board of Trustees of All Souls Church, and former member of the board of the Heart & Soul Charitable Fund. Mourners came from near and far to All Souls on April 26 for a celebration of her life, where friends, family and clergy recalled her "vital," loving and adventurous nature, her many contributions to All Souls, and her work in the upper echelons of the corporate world as well as the ministry, where she performed weddings in multiple languages.



WA member Pamela Patton delivered a Buddhist compassion and grief prayer. Judy's dear friend, WA member Marilyn Scott Murphy, spoke of their many adventures together since meeting in 1986 as leaders for the Girl Scouts of East Harlem — including New Year's Eve 2021 at Big Apple Circus followed by the fireworks in Central Park; Salon de Tokyo for routine massages; Petrossian; Radiance Tea House; countless theater outings; even American Pharoah's Triple Crown win at Belmont — and the heartbreaking moments when Judy was there for her. Marilyn finished by saying, "I wish Judy had passed knowing how much she was loved by hundreds & hundreds of people. Judy, if only you understood how many people loved you. We will all miss you and be grateful for the times that we shared with you."

SISTER, SISTER

Our 2022 Spring Event Featured America's O.G. (Original Gangsta) Women MDs

By Kate Kleber

On a cool, sunny Saturday in April, 53 Women's Alliance members and guests assembled together in Reidy Hall after a two-year hiatus to celebrate our annual Spring Event, and to hear Janice P. Nimura discuss her best-selling book "The Doctors Blackwell: How Two Pioneering Sisters Brought Medicine to Women — And Women to Medicine." On arrival, we found a great variety of tempting treats in a room transformed by Maureen Marwick and her able crew. Bright pink and lavender tablecloths, colorful floral napkins and bouquets of tulips on each table turned Reidy into a welcoming spring gathering place.



The featured speaker gave a fascinating account of the lives of the sisters Elizabeth and Emily Blackwell. She said that they saw early on how difficult it was for their father to provide for his family, and that having a husband would not guarantee financial stability. Consequently, when Elizabeth was exposed to the ideas of the 19th-century Transcendental writer Margaret Fuller, she saw a possible career path that could put her gifts to good use.

Fuller had written: "I think women need ... a much greater range of occupation than they have, to house their latent powers ... at present, women are the best helpers of one another." Affected by Fuller's words, Elizabeth decided to enter the field of medicine; she would serve the women who often received second-rate treatment. It was thought at the time that indigent women who sought hospital care did so because of their indiscriminate ways of living, and that the female practitioners who served them were poorly trained and nothing more than abortionists or charlatans. Realizing that the medical schools training female practitioners were far inferior to those training males, Elizabeth was determined, in spite of the initial scorn she received, to break the gender rule and gain acceptance.

How she and her younger sister Emily, whom she encouraged to follow in her footsteps, finally earned their medical degrees — Elizabeth as the first woman to do so in 1849, and Emily in 1854 — is an enthralling tale in the hands of Ms. Nimura. She writes that both sisters eventually won the respect of their male professors and classmates with their demonstrated intelligence and dedication. They took different approaches to their work. Elizabeth saw herself as helping humanity as a whole, while Emily preferred working directly with patients. Still, their accomplishments together were memorable. In 1857, they established the New York Infirmary for Indigent Women and Children, and in 1868, they opened the Women's Medical College of the New York Infirmary. To address Civil War aid, a meeting they organized in 1861 at the Cooper Union resulted in the formation of the Women's Central Association of Relief.

In time, each went on to adopt a daughter who brought much solace and support over the years. Our Spring Event provided an introduction to these two intrepid sisters, and gave us a welcome opportunity to visit with members and friends as well.

SHABNAM ABEDI

Women's Alliance members were thrilled to hear Shabnam Abedi, soprano soloist for All Souls and Musica Viva, give her Master of Music (MM) graduation concert at Juilliard on April 19. Both a classically-trained singer and a jazz vocalist, Shabnam was accompanied by her band members on piano, bass, percussion, and saxophone to a standing ovation. Her performance included jazz standards and two compositions of her own. Alliance members in attendance included (left to right) Deborah Taylor, Mary Ann Lang, Karen Steele, and next to Shabnam, Mary Geissman, Margaret MacCary, and Carolyn Jackson. Judith Staples is in back. Not in the photo were WA member Alice Clark and her husband, as well as choir member Rudy Giron. — *Karen Steele*



ROOSEVELT ISLAND

On a cool, sunny day in April, members enjoyed a guided walking & bus tour of Roosevelt Island by Judy Berdy of the Roosevelt Island Historical Society. Highlights included the The Girl Puzzle monument honoring Nellie Bly, the pioneering investigative journalist and women's rights advocate; the historic "New York City Lunatic Asylum" Octagon (now part of an apartment complex with stunning views), where Bly was committed in the 1880s disguised as a patient and famously uncovered patient abuse; and the innovative Cornell Tech campus. Seated, L to R: Susan Hoehn, Mary Geissman, Marianne Benjamin, Gerda Artes, Deborah Brinckerhoff. Standing, L to R: Winnie Olsen, Alix-Marie Hall, Alynne Wesson, Mary Ann Van Osdol, Barbara Reed, Mary Ann Lang, Maureen Marwick, Adrienne Navon, Sandra Fisher.



The Women's Alliance (WA) is a membership organization. If you are interested in learning more about WA and its various programs and events, please email WomensAlliance@AllSoulsnyc.org.

Alliance Alert Staff

WA Communications Chair: Mary Geissman

Alliance Alert Editor: Alynne Wesson

Copy Editor: Peggy Montgomery

Staff Writers: Chris Goodwin, Karen Steele, Kate Kleber, Rev. Carol Huston, Laura Pederson, Marilynn Scott Murphy

Managing Editor, Production: Christina Black