

THE ALLIANCE ALERT

March-April 2022

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



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Christine Goodwin



Spring may be in the air ... almost. Daylight Saving Time returns on Sunday, March 13th, and days are getting warmer. All Souls has reopened for in-person services, and Women's Alliance will be considering resuming in-person gatherings for luncheons with a speaker on our new meeting day, the 2nd Monday of the month: March 14th, April 11th, May 9th and June 13th. We hope to continue to provide a Zoom link even after we resume in-person meetings.

While we have been able to continue many of our pre-pandemic activities, such as speaking events, outings, special interest groups and charitable giving, we have not had in-person luncheons in two years and have sorely missed our social interaction and getting to know each other, which for me is the best part of Women's Alliance. Don't miss Judith Kozloff's article in this issue, "NYC's Best Bargain."

Congratulations to our own Heli Blum, who received the Hero's Award from The League during the All Souls Annual Meeting on Sunday, February 6th. A well-deserved recognition of all that Heli does for the All Souls community — her work with Navigators and Monday Night Hospitality, not to mention her service as the WA Program Chair for Luncheons, where she has scheduled so many interesting speakers from both within the WA community and the outside world. Bravo Heli!

Congratulations also to our own Anne Bradley, former WA Assistant Treasurer and the new President of the All Souls Board of Trustees.

As a follow-up to Rev. Daniel Kanter's November 2021 presentation to the Women's Alliance about the Texas fight for abortion rights, there will be a virtual Planned Parenthood "Day of Action" on Tuesday, March 8th at 12 noon. Here is a link for details about this event and others:

<https://www.mobilize.us/ppesa/event/439016/>

I hope you are all practicing standing on one leg while waiting for the elevator or brushing your teeth, as suggested by WA member Dr. Tara McNamara in her healthful and helpful January presentation about balance. I know that I'm walking a little taller and paying attention to standing up straight.

Stay tuned for more information as we return to in-person events. We need YOU!

WOMEN'S ALLIANCE UPCOMING EVENTS

The Executive Board encourages all members to participate in Women's Alliance activities. As some outings require the use of staircases, walking long distances or crossing uneven terrains, any member with physical limitations should use good judgment before registering. The Board asks that such members speak with the outing leader and consult the visit site to determine how able they will be to get around; further, it is strongly recommended that they bring a companion to help them. Because outing leaders are responsible to a group of attendees, they cannot assist an individual on an outing, unless, of course, an emergency arises. By participating in WA outings, attendees agree they have read this statement and will follow its recommendations.

Please check venue websites for the most current Covid precaution requirements, which may be in flux.

Wednesdays, March 2 & 16 and April 6 & 20, 2-4 p.m., Forrest Church Gallery

Bridge Special Interest Group (SIG)

All bridge players are welcome, even those with rusty skills! Judith Kozloff (judithuk@mindspring.com) has been organizing the return of this popular SIG for those with some experience playing bridge. The April 20 date may be changed as it conflicts with the Roosevelt Island outing.

Monday, March 14

Women's Alliance Membership Meeting

Monthly membership meetings include time to socialize, a brief business meeting and a speaker or program. We hope to resume in-person gatherings for luncheons, and to continue to provide a Zoom link even after we resume meeting in-person. Luncheon meetings are held from 12-2 p.m. and Zoom-only meetings from 3-4:30 p.m. Look for more details in upcoming emails from Christine Goodwin.

Wednesdays, March 16 & 23 and April 6 & 13, 1-2 p.m.

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

The Juilliard School's Wednesdays at One series offers free midday concerts:

March 16: Vocal arts

March 23: Percussion

April 6: Brass

April 13: Lab Orchestra

No ticket is required. Enter Alice Tully Hall on Broadway at 65th Street. More information about meeting up with other WA members to come via emails from Christine Goodwin.

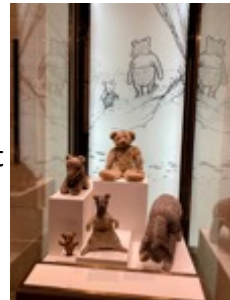
Wednesday, March 30, 11 a.m.

Polonsky Exhibit of The New York Public Library's Treasures

Join us for our first Spring Outing to "ooo" and "ahhh" at the library's first permanent installation of highlights from its vast research collections. Included in the exhibit are Thomas Jefferson's handwritten draft of the Declaration of Independence indicating his passionate denunciation of slavery that was cut from the final version, Shakespeare's First Folio, and the stuffed toys that inspired "Winnie-the-Pooh." Bring your headphones and smart phone to enjoy the Treasures Audio Guide.

The New York Public Library, 476 Fifth Avenue at 42nd Street. Enter on 42nd (coat check

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available) or up the stairs on Fifth. Meet at 11 a.m. at the exhibition entrance. The exhibition is free but requires a timed ticket (www.nypl.org/spotlight/treasures/visit), proof of vaccination, photo ID, and masks. Ticket holders enjoy a 10% discount at the Library Shop that day. We hope to have lunch at the Bryant Park Grill (indoors most likely) behind the Library. Final plans will be sent to members on March 23rd. RSVP to Deborah Brinckerhoff for the library and/or lunch at dbbrinckerhoff@gmail.com or 914-319-7739. Please include your email and cell phone number.

Monday, April 11

Women's Alliance Membership Meeting

Monthly membership meetings include time to socialize, a brief business meeting and a speaker or program. We hope to resume in-person gatherings for luncheons, and to continue to provide a Zoom link even after we resume meeting in-person. Luncheon meetings are held from 12-2 p.m. and Zoom-only meetings from 3-4:30 p.m. Look for more details in upcoming emails from Christine Goodwin.

Wednesday, April 20, 11 a.m. (Rain date: Friday 4/22)

Guided Tour of Cornell-Technion and Bloomberg Center, The Girl Puzzle Monument, and the Cherry Blossoms in Bloom(!) on Roosevelt Island

From the Tram stop on Roosevelt Island, we will take the free Red Bus to the northern tip of the island and see the Lighthouse Park and the new Girl Puzzle Monument (a "Must-See Outdoor Art Installation" — *Smithsonian Magazine*) that honors Nellie Bly, America's first investigative journalist who was dedicated to ending the oppression of women. Then we'll drive south to Jacobs Technion-Cornell Institute and tour the Bloomberg Center to hear about the creation of Cornell Tech and the brilliant initiatives taking place there.



Meet at 11 a.m. on Roosevelt Island at the Tram stop. The Island is accessible by Tram from Second Avenue (59th-60th), NYC Ferry (from E. 90th Street), and the F line. Plan to arrive by 10:45 a.m. Specific travel info will be sent one week prior to event. Lunch at 1 p.m. at The Café at Cornell-Tech. Afterwards we will enjoy the cherry blossoms. Then people can roam on their own to enjoy the blessings of Spring, and if desired, walk south to Louis Kahn's Franklin D. Roosevelt Four Freedoms State Park.

The Tour is limited to 14 and members only. Members who have not been on outings for the past year have priority until 4/13. To secure your spot, send a \$15 check, with your email and cell. Make it out to Sandra Fisher, 535 East 86th St. #21A, New York, NY 10028. I will keep a wait list. Cancellation by noon on April 15 to get your \$15 back. If there is a big demand, a second outing can be arranged soon after this one. The Women's Alliance is contributing \$150 toward the guide. This promises to be a popular outing. Questions to Sandra Fisher sfisher535@aol.com, 646-675-3608.

Women's Reading Group (SIG), Monthly, Ongoing on Zoom, 7:00 p.m.

March 8: *Bad Dreams and Other Stories*, Tessa Hadley

April 12: *The Vanishing Half: A Novel*, Brit Bennett

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

June 14: *Family Lexicon*, Natalia Ginzburg

For more info, email christina.black50@gmail.com

NYC'S BEST BARGAIN
Little-known, Affordable And Priceless
By Judith Kozloff

In one of the world's most expensive cities where else can you get all the benefits of the Women's Alliance for the \$25 annual dues?

- Two early evening/late afternoon parties with food and wine
- Two afternoon teas with guest speakers
- Nine monthly meetings — often with speakers, always with dessert and coffee/tea
- Access to many activities at no or low cost (bridge, book circle, cinema club, concerts, museum visits, etc.)
- The Alliance Alert newsletter to keep members informed
- Annual membership directory
- Last, but not least, the priceless friendship of congenial intelligent women

How is this miracle of loaves and fishes achieved? In a word — volunteers. Apart from organizing all the above, we are committed to a program of charitable donations, often through fundraising events. These activities need the help of all members. Please volunteer to help in the many programs and committees such as Finance, Investments, Audit, Speakers, Outings, and Special Interest Groups (SIGs — Bridge, Cinema, Music, Theater). If you have a special skill, it can be harnessed. And all able-bodied members should be involved in the catering of parties and the mammoth task of our major fundraisers, which help enable us to donate thousands of dollars annually to our chosen charities. Obviously, the minimal dues do not stretch to cover this essential goal.

Volunteering your help either in the kitchen (no culinary skills needed thanks to Costco) or with the fundraisers is a great way to connect and cement new friendships with your fellow members but, more importantly, it is FUN. There are lots of laughs over food prep and merchandising.

Without a greater proportion of our members helping, the burden falls onto a small number of members who are willing to pull their weight. So if you are physically able, please make the effort to join in so that the Women's Alliance can continue to fulfill its primary goals, both to members and to society.

I CAN ONLY PICK ONE?

WA member Sandra Fisher shares this daily quiz that was recently sent to her by wordgenius.com:

Unitarian-Universalists are known to be _____.

- A. Latitudinarian
- B. Leveraged
- C. Level
- D. Lackluster

(See Page 9 for the correct answer.)

MEMBER PROFILE: LOIS COLEMAN

Bringing Us Together

By Alynne Wesson



If the Genius Bar is where you go to get help with your Apple device, then Lois Coleman is the one-woman genius bar for many individuals and committees at All Souls. But she doesn't just troubleshoot. Lois, who has a very sunny presence, fosters connection, in the best sense of the digital term "web." She is the tech "genius" and teacher behind numerous online endeavors that help bring people together at All Souls. She has helped church members learn how

to use the All Souls Connexit Mighty Network, and has set up websites for the very popular Buddhism and Mindfulness group run by Director of Pastoral Ministries Pamela Patton

(allsoulsnycbuddhism.org), the All Souls Historical Society (allsoulsnychistory.org), and the Bicentennial Committee. She has served the last two groups in multiple capacities, because, she says, "the history of All Souls is fascinating to me." She has just joined the team undertaking a revamping the church's own website.

"Lucky me," says Pamela, who is also a WA member. "Lois volunteered to create the website for Buddhism & Mindfulness at All Souls. I can't imagine a more easy and earnest collaborator than Lois. She approaches a project with expertise but no conceit. She is a true partner in brainstorming. She kept the project moving quickly, and she kept me focused (meanwhile she was the one doing me a huge favor). Lois is as generous as she is talented, and our community is much the better for it."

For all Lois has done at All Souls, it is hard to believe she only joined in 2009. Monday Night Hospitality was an introduction to volunteerism at the church, and she served as a Lay Pastoral Associate for five years. There, she "found that she learned at least as much as she was able to give by offering compassion and a listening ear to others in the community."

Lois' work-in-progress also includes working on a committee setting up All Souls' accreditation with the UUA's "Green Sanctuary" program, which promotes climate justice. It aims, in part, to push the church toward becoming, from an environmental perspective, more involved with local, underprivileged communities.

The tech work and her efforts to foster connection at All Souls are natural steps for Lois. Between 1999 and her retirement in 2019, she was a research and instructional services librarian and, until 2010, the "webmaster" for the Barnard Library at Barnard College in Manhattan. She had taught herself HTML. Before obtaining her Master's in Library Science in the 1990s, she taught junior high school mathematics (not "math") in Manhattan, and before that she taught high school mathematics and A-level psychology in her native England.

Women's Alliance members and others at All Souls have received instruction from Lois about the digital tools available to them, and she chuckles when asked if teaching young people or mature adults is more challenging. "Adults are much harder to teach — you have to take into account all their life experience and that they are not used to sitting and receiving instruction!"

Lois grew up the daughter of a Methodist minister father and a physics teacher mother. "I could say Con't . . .

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they were very devout, but they didn't talk about religion. Something very English about that." During her young adulthood she questioned religion and "realized I was not a Christian." After she moved to New York City to join her American husband in the early 1980s, she became involved with Unitarianism, first at Community Church and then at the Fourth Universalist Society, where she served on the board and then as president of the congregation from 2007 to 2008.

During this time Lois was a divorced working mother living on the Upper West Side. While her daughter is now grown and lives in her own apartment there, Lois happily made the move to Riverdale with her partner Harry Miller, a Dharma teacher who is involved with the All Souls Buddhism and Mindfulness program. They met in 2014, she cheerfully reports, on Match, where his profile made an excellent first impression due, in part, to his stated interest in Buddhism and his warm eyes. Last year Lois joined the Women's Alliance to meet more All Souls women, have interesting conversations and go on outings with friends."

IN THE COMPANY OF WOMEN

The First in a Series About Historical Women of All Souls

By Laura Pedersen

Happy Spring Humanists!

A number of years ago I began giving sanctuary tours with WA member Mary-Ella Holst. And one quickly realizes there aren't ANY memorials to women in our sanctuary, not so much as a plaque or an embroidered pillow. Yet, women have played an outsized role at All Souls. In fact, I think we could say our church was founded by a woman.

All Souls was the first Unitarian congregation to be organized in New York City when Lucy Channing Russel (1787-1863) invited about 40 friends and neighbors into her lower Manhattan home in 1819 to listen to an address by her brother, the Unitarian theologian and minister William Ellery Channing. Their enthusiasm culminated in the formation of this congregation, which proceeded to erect its first building in 1820-21, before it had even found a minister.

As it happens, there's a large plaque honoring William Ellery Channing and also one for that first minister, William Ware.



Mrs. William Washington Russell, oil on canvas by Charles Cromwell Ingham, about 1825. Photograph © Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Editor's note:

Laura's research uncovers an alternative spelling of Lucy Channing's married name in the All Souls archives. "Though the Internet abounds with Russell with two Ls, our materials have typically used one."

For a link to Laura's fabulous tour of the All Souls sanctuary, please visit the homepage of the All Souls Historical Society (<https://www.allsoulsnychistory.org/>).

THE POWER OF NARRATIVE

Nikkole Salter delivered the 2022 Angie Utt Lecture

By Marilyn Scott Murphy

On Saturday, February 12, the WA's annual Angie Utt Lecture about women in American culture was honored by the presence of Nikkole Salter, the new Chair of the Department of Theatre Arts at Howard University. She defined herself as a storyteller, and her talk ranged from the power of narrative to theater as activism to her goal to "make a cultural contribution to the future" though working with young people. During the spirited Q&A that followed, she addressed topics as large as anti-racism and the acceleration of change between generations, and as particular as her learning curve in her new job.



Nikkole is currently an administrator who has worked as a professional actress, an OBIE Award-winning and Pulitzer Prize-nominated playwright, and a teacher. As an advocate, Nikkole has served on the boards of many prominent organizations, including, currently, the Council of The Dramatists Guild, where she serves as Chair of the Board of the Theatre Communications Group; and The Continuum Project, Inc., a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that creates innovative artistic programming for community empowerment and enrichment, where she is Executive Artistic Director. PLEASE go to www.nikkolesalter.com to learn about all of Nikkole's activities.

From April 8 to May 8 you can see Nikkole live onstage at The Huntington Calderwood/BCA in Boston. She will be acting in "Our Daughters, Like Pillars," a world premiere. AND ... at Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C., from March 19 to May 14, you can see the musical "Grace," for which she co-authored the book with Nolan Williams, Jr., who wrote the music and lyrics.

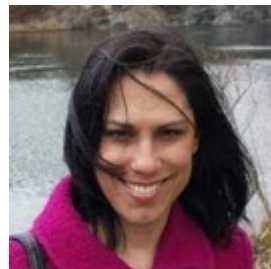
We were lucky Nikkole had the time to Zoom with the Women's Alliance. She is an amazing woman who is charming, elegant, talented, beautiful and compassionate. She is a treasure.

FORESTALL THE FALL

Dr. Tara McNamara helps keep our lives in balance

By Mary Ann Van Osdol

Women's Alliance member Dr. Tara McNamara, a physical therapist who specializes in strength and conditioning for older adults, presented a balance workshop at our January meeting. She demonstrated correct posture and showed us how to gently strengthen muscles and improve balance while standing and walking. Many of the 41 WA members watching on the Zoom meeting enthusiastically participated (at home) along with her.



2022 WOMEN'S ALLIANCE OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Executive Board consists of all WA officers plus chairs of all standing committees.

Note – the slate is presented to membership in October, voted on in November, and takes office in February. Officers are elected to two-year terms and may serve for two terms. Per the By-Laws, officers must be members of The Unitarian Church of All Souls.

Officers

- President: Christine Goodwin (first term, second year)
- Vice-President: Winnie Olsen (first term, first year)
- Recording Secretary: Linda Floyd (first term, first year)
- Corresponding Secretary: Joyce Elderfield (second term, second year)
- Treasurer: Karen Steele (second term, second year)
- Assistant Treasurer (and Chair of the Investment Committee): Alix-Marie Hall (appointed to fill vacancy February 2021-February 2022; first term, first year)

Chairs

- Chair of the Finance Committee: Jane Colvin
- Chair of the Investment Committee: Alix-Marie Hall
- Chair of the Membership Committee: Barbara Reed
- Co-Chair of the Program Committee: Outings: Sandra Fisher
- Co-Chair of the Program Committee: Luncheons: Heli Blum
- Chair of the Communications Committee: Mary Geissman

Executive Board Members Emerita

Sandra Ekberg, Mary-Ella Holst, Maureen Marwick

Women's Alliance Committees

- Auditor and Tax Preparation: Gerda Artes
- The Alliance Alert: Alynne Wesson, Editor; Peggy Montgomery, Copy Editor; Christina Black, Managing Editor and Production
- Finance Committee: Jane Colvin, Chair; Alix-Marie Hall, Carol Kirkman, and Peggy Montgomery, members. Chris Goodwin (*ex officio*) and Karen Steele (*ex officio*).
- Investment Committee: Alix-Marie Hall, Chair; Carol Kirkman and Judith Kozloff, members. Chris Goodwin (*ex officio*) and Karen Steele (*ex officio*)
- Membership Committee: Barbara Reed, Chair; Linda Becker, Nancy Blair, and Anne Brewer, members.
- Outings Committee: Sandra Fisher, Chair; Deborah Brinckerhoff, Alix-Marie Hall, Susan Hoehn, and Maureen Marwick members. Seeking new members.
- Luncheons Program Committee: Heli Blum, Chair; Shellie Bailkin, Sumi Kubota, and Maureen Marwick, members. Seeking new members.
- Communications Committee: Mary Geissman, Chair; Alynne Wesson, editor of *The Alliance Alert*; Peggy Montgomery and Christina Black, Lois Coleman members.

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- Fundraising ad hoc committee: Chris Goodwin, Sandra Fisher, Sandra Ekberg, Joan Flesch, Anne Brewer, Michelle Boston, Rita Frank, members.
- WA Award Committee (formed December 2021): Jane Colvin, Carol Kirkman, Winnie Olsen, Mary Dugan, Mary Gundermann, members.

Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

- Bridge: Judith Kozloff
- Cinema: Maureen Marwick
- Play Readings: Sandra Ekberg
- Music: Mary Geissman
- Women's Reading Group: Christina Black

Nominating Committee 2021

Sandra Ekberg (Chair); Barbara Reed, Sandra Fisher, Karen Steele, Mary Geissman

Annual WA Events

- Welcome Back Party - September
- Holiday Party (members only) - December
- Angie Utt Lecture - February
- Spring Event - April

CORRECT ANSWER TO THE DAILY QUIZ ON PAGE 4

A: Latitudinarian [la-də-t(y)oo-dn-ER-ee-ən]: Allowing latitude in religion; showing no preference among varying creeds and forms of worship.

Alliance Alert Staff

*WA Communications Chair: **Mary Geissman***

*Alliance Alert Editor: **Alynne Wesson***

*Copy Editor: **Peggy Montgomery***

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*Managing Editor, Production: **Christina Black***

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.