



THE ALLIANCE ALERT

November-December 2023

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



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Christine Goodwin

With November and December fast approaching, the holidays are right around the corner. The Women's Alliance activities are in full swing, starting with the September 26th Welcome Back Party for the All Souls community, sponsored by the WA along with much appreciated support from The League. Our monthly luncheons are being held in person and at a new location that is attractive and comfortable and that we hope will encourage people to join us and enjoy community and socializing after a three-year hiatus due to Covid and construction at All Souls.



On Sunday, December 3rd, WA has an exciting opportunity to return to our popular Holiday Gift Table, though on a smaller scale. WA will sponsor Coffee Hour on December 3rd, and also hold the popular sale of jewelry and fashion items during Coffee Hour and extending into Sunday evening with the Musica Viva concert at 5 p.m.

We will also be holding a raffle as a fun event and a way to raise some funds. These efforts will require lots of help from members, so please think about which you will be able to help with. I will be sending out more information very soon.

We hope this year we can share a truly thankful Thanksgiving with family and friends and celebrate a joyful Hanukkah and Christmas.

Finally, I wish you all a most happy Holiday season and a blessed New Year!

QUESTION

*When did the Sunday service at All Souls first use a female usher?
(Answer on Page 8)*

WOMEN'S ALLIANCE UPCOMING EVENTS

NOTE ON EVENT PARTICIPATION: The Executive Board encourages all members to participate in Women's Alliance activities. However, 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.

Wednesdays, November 1-December 6, 12:45 p.m.

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

Juilliard's "Wednesdays at One" concerts are free with open seating. No ticket is required. WA member Mary Geissman plans to attend all concerts listed below. If you wish to join her, meet in the lobby of Alice Tully Hall at 12:45 p.m. before the 1 p.m. concert. Optional lunch following the one-hour concert at Café Paradiso across the street, on the grounds of Lincoln Center. For more information contact Mary at 646-238-7280, migeissman@gmail.com.

November 1 — Vocal Arts

November 8 — Lab Orchestra

December 6 — Honors Chamber Music

Thursday, November 2

Kendal on Hudson

A visit to Sheila Darnborough, Pat Taylor, Hanan Watson, and Maureen Marwick, WA members who have moved to Kendal on Hudson, a retirement community in Sleepy Hollow, NY. Lunch and an information session about Kendal are included. This 3-hour trip, which involves a 9:53 a.m. train from Grand Central and a Kendal van that accommodates 12, has long been fully booked.

Friday, November 10, 11 a.m.

WA Monthly Outing to "Judy Chicago: Herstory"



The first comprehensive New York museum survey of work by Judy Chicago (b. 1939). Perhaps you have seen her infamous feminist installation "The Dinner Party" at the Brooklyn Museum. This exhibition will encompass Chicago's 60-year career, taking over four floors of the New Museum. Details about an optional lunch afterwards will be included in an email a week before the event. Meet at 11 a.m. at the New Museum (newmuseum.org), 235 Bowery. Admission is \$22; \$19 Senior. Buy a timed ticket well in advance. Leader: Sandra Fisher, sfisher535@aol.com or 646-675-3608.

Sunday, November 12, 1 p.m.

Ministerial Transition Dialogue with the All Souls Board

This will be the second meeting on this subject. It will take place in Reidy Friendship Hall and on Zoom.

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Wednesday, November 15, 12-2 p.m.

WA Membership Meeting

Lunch (BYO), socializing, a business meeting, and a talk by WA member and artist Gail Rodney on "Challenges I Want to Meet as an Artist." Gail's work is in numerous private and institutional collections. We'll provide coffee, tea and a sweet. Community Room, 170 E. 87th St. (Third-Lexington).



Sunday, December 3, following the 11:15 a.m. service

WA members serve at Coffee Hour in Reidy Friendship Hall

See Chris Goodwin's message on Page 1 for more details.

Saturday, December 9, 11 a.m.

"This is New York: 100 Years of the City in Art and Pop Culture"

A multi-gallery exhibition celebrating the centennial of the Museum of the City of New York through the eyes of artists and creators, inventors and pioneers, locals, and visitors. Meet at 11 a.m. at the entrance of the Museum (mcny.org) and pay what you wish (the suggested contribution is \$20, \$14 Senior). 1220 Fifth Ave. at 103rd Street. Optional lunch at 1 p.m. at the museum's cafeteria, with limited but delicious food from Amy's Bread. Leader: Susan Hoehn, Mshnyc50@gmail.com, 347 752 8562. Please let her know if you are coming by Dec. 7th.

Wednesday, December 13, 4-6 p.m.

WA Holiday Party!

Please bring finger food to share, sweet or savory, plus your own serving platter or dish and serving utensil. We will provide plates, napkins and eating utensils. Look for emails from Chris Goodwin for more details. 170 E. 87th St., Community Room, 3rd floor.

Sunday, December 17, 5 p.m.

All Souls Holiday Show of Songs & Stories

Laura Pedersen (WA member and All Souls' humor laureate) presents a one-hour show in the sanctuary with David Rockefeller, Paula Ewin, guest musicians and the All Souls All Star Singers, followed by refreshments and conviviality in Reidy Friendship Hall. No reservations or tickets. Festive dress encouraged but not required. Looking for some ambassadors to point our visitors in the right direction i.e. Voluntary Servitude. Ambassadors rock up at 4:30pm.

Women's Reading Group (SIG)

First Tuesday of each month, 7:00 p.m. on Zoom

Nov 7: *Old Filth* by Jane Gardham

Dec 5: Poetry reading evening

January 2: *Demon Copperhead* by Barbara Kingsolver

February 6: *Infidel* by Ayaan Hirsi Ali, memoir

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



MEMBER PROFILE

By Sally Turner

Suzanne (Suzy) Salomon is one of the many people who make All Souls such a vibrant community and we are fortunate to have her back after a long hiatus. Not just back, as in sitting in the pews on Sunday, but back with gusto!

Suzy describes her reconnection with All Souls as part of her on-going spiritual journey. To this end, she regularly attends and participates in Pamela's enriching Buddhism sessions and Galen's insightful poetry sessions. She enjoys helping others and is intentional in striving to make the world a better place, using her education and experience to provide business guidance as an advisor and board member at several non-profit organizations. At All Souls she enjoys organizing activities such as the Spring Brunch and participating in the Women's Alliance events to facilitate friendship and community. Helping others is also in her DNA.

In her own words:

I was an only child born on the South Side of Chicago to loving and devoted parents. My mother was born and raised in St. Louis, then after Washington University there, she went to Smith College in MA and the Sorbonne in Paris. She'd intended to study further in Spain but the Spanish Civil cut that off. She returned to New York and began working for the Office of War Information (a predecessor of the CIA), then moved back to St. Louis to open a Midwestern office for the OWI. Back home, she met my father just before he was to be shipped overseas by the Army, and after many censored letters back and forth, he was able to return to Chicago in December 1945. No winter coat was waiting for him; my grandmother had given away most of his clothes to refugees who had escaped Europe! My father rushed to St. Louis, married my mother and brought her to Chicago. I was born 15 months later. From early on my parents instilled in me a desire/commitment to be there for others, with values and ethics such as social justice and racial equity that I've since learned are core to Unitarianism Universalism.

Suzy eventually came to the East Coast to attend Wellesley College and obtained a masters degree at Princeton University in public policy and urban planning. Then she was on the way to her self-described "diverse, non-linear career," starting with community development, and many years in the business world in corporate positions, financial services and real estate. In addition to her work with non-profits, she owns and manages a small rental apartment complex in upstate New York.

Suzy has friends and family near and far including two grandchildren named for her. She has happily lived near the East River in Midtown for many years, currently with Lily, her loving Cavalier King Charles Spaniel. She's enjoying making new friends at All Souls, especially through Women's Alliance events.

WA MEMBERS IN CHURCH NEWS

- With the responsibility for a new All Souls website passed to the Board of Trustees, **Anne Bradley** was asked to lead the project working with a professional web developer to ensure the new website would attract the biggest number of new people to the church as possible.
- **Pamela Patton**, All Souls' director of pastoral ministries, has a new title, "Director of Congregational Ministries." Communications and membership & engagement have been added to her responsibilities. (Gretchen Gabrielson and Taylor Gallihue now report to her.) Also, she has two Union Seminary Buddhist interns, Emma Markham and Laura Cohen, and a new part-time administrative assistant, Rebecca Izuchukwu.
- **Judy Samuelson** is chair of the Nominating Committee that is looking for candidates interested in serving on the All Souls Board of Trustees.
- **Karen Steele** is serving on the Nominating Committee for the second year in a row.

Please let the Alliance Alert know at alynnewesson@gmail.com if you are involved with church work that is new to you. We'd love to hear from you.



A REPORT FROM THE COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Many thanks to WA's Communications Committee, which is chaired by Lois Coleman. It has a lot to report:

- The new Women's Alliance Directory has been formatted for printing and is ready to be sent out as a PDF that members can print if they want to.
- New WA brochures have been printed, and they can be found every Sunday morning in the vestibule outside the sanctuary. Please grab one for a friend who might be interested!
- The WA website is at <https://www.allsoulsnyc-womensalliance.org>. We're waiting to find out exactly what we'll be able to put on the new church website that is under development before we continue developing our own website further.
- The WA's Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/womensallianceAllSoulsnyc/>) is not being used by anyone, but we're keeping it in case people do want to use it. However, it needs to be changed into a regular page — right now it's a business page. If any of the WA members is a power-user of Facebook and would volunteer to do that for us, we would be grateful. Contact Sandra Fisher, ComCom member, at sfisher535@aol.com.

The Alliance Alert, which is also a concern of the Communications Committee, would like to give a special shout-out to Lois, who has blessed the WA with her imagination and her digital knowledge, and has donated countless hours towards making these projects possible.

WORDS OF WISDOM ABOUT MINISTERIAL TRANSITION

The announcement by Galen Guengerich that he will be stepping down as All Souls' senior minister in December 2024 has sparked wide-ranging conversations and church-wide meetings about what comes next. The answer, in part, is the search for a new minister by a search committee that has yet to be formed. Meanwhile, two WA members who served on previous ministerial search committees at All Souls, and who surely have much wisdom to impart, are opening up at this early stage in the process to offer just a few words of wisdom:



Jane Levenson, the only surviving member of the search committee that nominated Forest Church to be All Souls' new minister back in the 1970s, strongly feels that above all, the search for a new minister "needs to be a really open process." Only "certain things do have to remain secret," she says, like the names of all the applicants, who usually prefer privacy. But an open process is key.

Jane was part of a seven-member ministerial search committee chosen by a "detailed process involving all-church input; five were selected at a several-hour voting and two were selected by the Board of Trustees following the voting." She remembers there were some 48 applicants for the ministerial position; "all resumes were studied by us and 24 were chosen for two-hour interviews with the group." Six received weekend visits with the committee — members of whom would arrive separately to hear a candidate preach or speak at a location outside All Souls, in order to protect the privacy of the applicant.

Following UUA guidance, one candidate was chosen to preach to the congregation of All Souls in anticipation of a congregational vote to approve his appointment. Forrest preached twice, on two consecutive Sundays, and during the week he visited with congregational groups. Jane thought he was very good but a little cautious during his first sermon, perhaps because he was nervous about the audition. The second Sunday he seemed more relaxed and ready to take chances, and the congregation was blown away. Forrest was elected All Souls' ninth minister with well more than 95 percent of the vote, and he began his tenure at the church in 1978.

Hanan Watson was co-chair of the search committee that found Audette Fulbright, who began work as our associate minister in 2017. In her professional life, Hanan was a veteran of "a lot of years in the search business," as she puts it. The first thing she advises is that the search committee and the church itself remain "flexible ... It is good to have a goal, but be ready to adjust as needed." She notes that similar issues are encountered in business, educational institutions and not-for profit organizations. In All Souls' search for an associate minister, the church "had put together a solid schedule of what would happen on what date." The process was expected to take one year but ended up taking two.



The search may involve "so many variables" that are not on anyone's radar, Hanan says. Right now, for instance, she wonders if potential candidates will consider New York a difficult location due to Covid and pricing, especially if they are hoping to have some outdoor space, their own patch of green.

Editor's note: Looking for some comical relief on this topic? Check out Michelle Huneven's UU-centric "Search: A Novel."

WA OFFICER CANDIDATES

Four members of WA's executive board will finish their terms in February, and the names of candidates to fill their positions were announced at the October 18th membership meeting by Nominating Committee Chair Barbara Reed. Candidates will be voted on at the November 15th membership meeting and will assume office after the WA's Annual Meeting in February. Many thanks to the Nominating Committee and to the candidates, who include:

Anne Bradley for Vice President — Anne was previously a member of All Souls for 25 years, a teacher in RE, president of the board of trustees, and chair of the Heart & Souls auction. She is pleased to have worked with the team that made our church accessible to people with disabilities. In 2009 Anne retired early from her career in finance and left New York to become Deputy Chief of Staff to the newly appointed U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand. Just before the pandemic she retired from Capitol Hill and returned to New York, where she is happy to be back at All Souls.

Mary Dugan for Recording Secretary of the meetings of the Executive Board — A single parent, Mary became a UU in 1968 in California, crediting our churches with infusing her with steadfast determination to raise her three children, and persevering into late life as a grandma, partner to Robert, and a grant writer for school desegregation, immigrants' rights, making grants for services to LGBTQ elderly, and other good causes.

Barbara Reed for Recording Secretary of the monthly membership meetings — Barbara is a retired art librarian who was the WA Recording Secretary for five years and was Membership Chair for the past ten years. Since she retired from the Met Museum research library, she has been volunteering at the Cooper Hewitt Museum Library.

Sally Turner for Chair of the Investment Committee and Assistant Treasurer — Sally moved to Hoboken about a year ago after living in Seattle for the past 40 years. She and her husband live down the hall from one of their daughters and are actively engaged helping her raise their two grandsons. Their other daughter is just across the river in Manhattan, and it's a dream come true to live as a close family again. Sally has a BA in economics and an MBA with a concentration in marketing. She worked for Verizon for 25 years, holding various positions in product management and new business development. After retiring in 2004 she went back to school to get a master's in counseling, which led to a therapist/managerial position in a behavioral health clinic at Group Health (now Kaiser), then to her own practice. Last stop before retirement was managing a women's health clinic for Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest.

L to r: Anne Bradley, Sally
Turner (back), Mary Dugan,
Barbara Reed



PHOTOS FROM FALL ACTIVITIES

Alix Hall snapped this photo of WA members during the membership outing to Downtown Yonkers on September 21st. Front, l to r: Mary Geissman, Sandra Fisher, Lois Coleman. Back l to r: Ellen Gabriel, Chris Goodwin, Susan Schwarz. They are seen at the outdoor Enslaved Africans Rain Garden with one its bronze statues depicting freed enslaved people of Westchester County. The artist is female sculptor Vinnie Bagwell.



Victoria Kimbrough led a WA membership outing to the Morris-Jumel Mansion and nearby Sylvan Terrace on October 6th. Pictured at the mansion are l to r: Sally Turner, Sandra Fisher, Leader Victoria Kimbrough, Mary Geissman, Sylvia Dones (Victoria's friend from Mexico City), Melanie Niemiec, Brigitte Seidel.



WA member Pamela Patton conducted a poetry workshop for the large crowd at our October 18th membership meeting.

ANSWER

WA member Jane Levenson remembers when the Rev. Walter Kring asked if she would like to be a hostess, one of the women who wore a flower and greeted people in the vestibule for the Sunday service. She replied she would rather be an usher, one of the people (then all men) who further greeted attendees, walked them down to a pew after asking if there was a preference, collected the offerings, and then counted the money. Sometime a year later, after the Rev. Kring heard from some older men that perhaps it was time for a change, Jane's appointment as an usher was approved by the mostly male board. It was around 1971.

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