



## **THE ALLIANCE ALERT**

### **May-June 2023**

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



### **MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT**

**By Christine Goodwin**

First, I want to alert Women's Alliance members that you will all be receiving a Member Survey in the next few weeks. The Survey Committee has been at work designing a survey for members which will be most helpful to let us know what topics and activities members are interested in. Please take a moment to complete the Survey when you receive it and let your voice be heard.

Before we turn our thoughts to May and June, we had a busy March and April with several opportunities to be together. Some activities, besides our monthly luncheons with a speaker and monthly outings to museums and other places of interest, included:

- Our annual Angie Utt Lecture on March 3<sup>rd</sup> featured Donna Lieberman, executive director of the NYCLU. Many thanks to Mary Geissman for making the arrangements for this powerful and informative presentation. You can read more about it on Page 6.
- One of our new members, Suzy Salomon, quickly put together a "Spring Awakening" brunch that followed the March 19<sup>th</sup> Sunday service with Pamela Patton preaching. It was an All Souls event, but supported by many WA members, and a delightful, well-attended celebration.
- Thanks to the WA team that helped with the April 16<sup>th</sup> Coffee Hour, sponsored by The Women's Alliance. Gretchen Gabrielson, the new Membership & Engagement Coordinator at All Souls, has been working with various All Souls groups to sponsor Coffee Hour each Sunday. Thanks to Joyce Elderfield, Anne Brewer, Anne Bradley, Sally Turner, and Carol Schneider for their help in making the Women's Alliance Coffee Hour a success.

The Communications Committee, chaired by Lois Coleman, is planning many ways to enhance WA communication. Lois is developing a WA website. We need some members to help with monitoring and updating the website. Please let Lois know if you are interested in helping with this new activity which will help us all stay connected - [lois.coleman@gmail.com](mailto:lois.coleman@gmail.com).

May and June will wrap up the WA official activities until September, but there will be other events of interest, such as summer concerts in Central Park and possibly other "pop up" activities which I will email to membership.

Again — be on the lookout for the Member Survey — we need all your voices to make beautiful music!

Wishing you all a wonderful Summer!



## 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.*

**Wednesday, May 10, 10:15 a.m.**

**WA Monthly Outing: Gracie Mansion, East 88th Street & East End Avenue   \*Sold Out\***

Join us for a private docent tour of the official residence of the mayor of New York City. Built in 1799 overlooking a scenic bend of the East River, it is one of the oldest surviving wood structures in Manhattan. Max 20, with 3 spaces are available for spouses and friends. \$10/\$15 each to cover a donation to the Gracie Mansion Conservancy from the Women's Alliance. NOTE: The tour requires standing for about an hour. Accessible entrances and elevators are available. MEET at 10:15 a.m. at the entrance to Gracie Mansion, 88th Street & East End Avenue.

Leader: Sandra Fisher ([sfisher535@aol.com](mailto:sfisher535@aol.com))

LUNCH: Sandra will host a Brown Bag Lunch at her apartment nearby at 535 E. 86th St. You bring your lunch and she will provide drinks, dessert and a nice place to socialize.

*\*A BIG THANK YOU TO JOYCE ELDERFIELD FOR ARRANGING THIS TOUR\**

**Friday, May 12, 5:30 p.m.**

**Ramble Birdwatching Walk**

WA member Christina Black will lead an evening birding walk in the Central Park Ramble. Bring your binoculars, good walking shoes and meet at the Central Park Loeb Boathouse outdoor eatery at 5:30p.m. sharp. Note — there are steps and uneven terrain. Please RSVP to Chris Goodwin ([chrisg113@gmail.com](mailto:chrisg113@gmail.com)) or 646-243-4015, so we will know to look out for you and can contact you if any change (due to rain).

**Wednesday, May 17, 12 noon-2 p.m.**

**WA Membership Meeting, Reidy Friendship Hall**

Tom Check and Mary Hamilton of First Unitarian Universalist Brooklyn's Immigrant Solidarity Committee will talk about their experiences helping asylum seekers. Founded in 2017, the Committee has continuously adapted to meet the myriad and evolving needs of immigrants, including very short-term housing at the church and longer-term (up to a few years) housing in congregants' homes. Lunch (BYO) and business meeting, followed by our speaker and socializing. We'll provide coffee, tea and a sweet.

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**Saturday, May 20, 3-5 p.m.**

**WA Spring Event, Reidy Friendship Hall**

The Rev. David Robb, All Souls' former longtime Assistant Minister for Adult Education and Scholar in Residence, will address the climate crisis in his talk, "Care of the Earth: A Biblical Perspective." A number of commentators have, perhaps by virtue of major misinterpretations, held that biblical traditions of the West have contributed significantly to the current climate crisis. David will take a fresh look at the creation narrative in the Book of Genesis to seek to understand its original intent, and whether it might support more creative action on behalf of the environment.

**Wednesday, June 14, 10:30 a.m.**

**WA Monthly Outing: Theodore Roosevelt House, 28 East 20th St.**

Join us for a public tour of the Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace National Historic Site, where the 26th U.S. president was born in 1858 and spent most of his childhood. The townhouse was demolished in 1916 and rebuilt in 1923 by the Women's Roosevelt Memorial Association, with Theodate Pope Riddle, the first woman to become a licensed architect in New York, serving as architect. The restored rooms reflect their appearance between 1865 and 1872, and most of the furnishings are from the original house or were provided by Roosevelt family members. The tour is free, with no notification required, but please note that it will have a limit of 18 participants. ([www.nps.gov.thrb](http://www.nps.gov.thrb)) MEET in the lobby at 10:30 a.m. to secure a spot in the 11 a.m. public tour.



Leader: Alix-Marie Hall, 917-621-5495 cell, [AMHAdvisory@yahoo.com](mailto:AMHAdvisory@yahoo.com).

LUNCH afterwards in the neighborhood with those interested. Please notify Alix by email by Tuesday morning, June 13, if you would like to join us at Daily Provisions Union Square (101 East 19th St., at Park Avenue) at 12:30 p.m.

**Summer Evenings, June 13-August 1, 7:30 p.m.**

**Music Special Interest Group (SIG)**

Join other WA members for free outdoor programs of classical music by prominent groups. First come, first served.

Tuesday, June 13 — Acronym (early music string ensemble), Naumburg Bandshell, Central Park

Tuesday, June 27 — The Knights & Masumi Per Rostad, viola, Naumburg Bandshell, Central Park

Tuesday, July 11 — A Far Cry (string orchestra), Naumburg Bandshell, Central Park

Saturday, July 22 — Mostly Mozart Festival Orchestra, Lincoln Center, Damrosch Park

Tuesday, July 25 — Nosky's Baroque Band, Naumburg Bandshell, Central Park

Tuesday, August 1 — ECCO (East Coast Chamber Orchestra), Naumburg Bandshell, Central Park

**Women's Reading Group (SIG)**

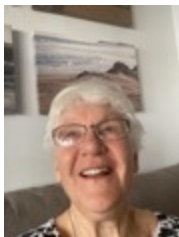
**Second Tuesday of each month, 7:00 p.m. on Zoom**

May 9: *The Rose Code*, by Kate Quinn

June 13: *The Tea Girl of Hummingbird Lane*, by Lisa See

For more information, contact: [christina.black50@gmail.com](mailto:christina.black50@gmail.com)

**WA MEMBER PROFILE**  
**Lydia Dinkelmann on Body and Spirit**  
**By Sally Turner**



If you're lucky enough to hear a deep throated, infectious laugh at All Souls, it's a good guess Lydia Dinkelmann is nearby. Lydia radiates kindness and interest in so many things and when she talks with you, she has that gift of making you feel *you* are what she's most interested in at that moment!

Lydia grew up in South Africa in a small, rural community founded by German Lutherans, part of a significant number of Germans who immigrated to South Africa in the late 19th-century. Her community was well over 1,000 people and had its own church and school, where the teachers were always from Germany. German was spoken by everyone, and to this day Lydia and her entire family use German as their everyday language.

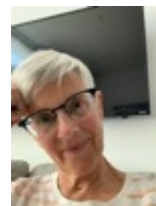
Lydia studied at Stellenbosch University, where she focused on music and German and became a teacher herself for a few years. After she married and had children, she became a lecturer at the Teachers College, teaching aspiring primary school teachers beginning piano and recorder, as all primary school teachers were expected to be able to teach music. She also provided "music therapy," in her words, to those who felt they had no musical ability.

Over the years she began to feel that the Lutheran church didn't "quite fit," and she started looking for something more meaningful to her beliefs, which she describes as always being deeply spiritual. What she eventually found was Divine Science, a religious movement within the wider New Thought movement. Divine Science teaches that the fullness of Spirit is forever pouring itself through the mind of man, limited only by the way man thinks about life. Therefore, all change begins as an activity in the mind and manifests as a personal experience.

Divine Science considers healing very important, and this is true for Lydia. At the age of 60 she began studying and practicing Body Stress Relief, a health profession concerned with unlocking the tension stored in physical structures, thereby assisting the body in restoring its maximum efficiency. One of her sons who still lives in South Africa followed her into this profession, and each morning the family meets on Zoom to practice yoga together!

Lydia's daughter lives here on the Upper West Side, and about 10 years ago she decided to move in with her and help her raise her two boys. One is now 18 and has gone away to college, and the other is 12, and in addition to being a sixth grader, studies ballet every afternoon. She was attending a Divine Science church in Secaucus when she first arrived, but it was a big effort to get there. Somehow she found All Souls in the neighborhood and it suits her spiritual needs very well. We're lucky to have her as part of our community!

*Sally Turner is a new member of the Women's Alliance and enjoys museums, speakers, and movies with others. She recently returned to the NYC area after moving to the Pacific Northwest 53 years ago. It's her joy to be near daughters and grandchildren. She and her husband of 43 years regularly attend Sunday services at All Souls.*



## VIEWING HABITS

### WA Members admit what they've been binge-watching



I love mysteries, especially the British, like the “Endeavor” series. Also “Perry Mason” with Raymond Burr and Sherlock Holmes films with Basil Rathbone. I used to record them. I recorded every episode of “Perry Mason.” They’re in black & white, they’re not loud, and they’re slow moving. Every time I watch them I find there’s something I missed before — they always become new again. — **Christina Bellamy**

My binge-worthy events involve weekend jaunts to Central Park: people watching extraordinaire. The humanity, the clothing, the unusual attitudes — truly a park for the people. Secondly, PBS has international, artistic, and historic soap-opera series with sob-worthy stories that touch your emotions. Great escape material. — **Annette Cohen**

I bet I watch “The Intern” with Robert De Niro and Anne Hathaway once a year. It reinforces how much senior citizens have to contribute, and a key scene of the movie does take place in the All Souls Chapel. Also, George and I have a BritBox subscription, and we just finished the series “Pie in the Sky” about a talented police detective whose real love is being a chef. So the series attractively combines British police procedural with lovely food. — **Marilyn Collins**

Over the years I have watched very few movies and TV shows; but during the lockdown I have had time to catch up on some of the 50 years of shows that I missed, and do binge watch at times. I keep busy with a lot of projects during the day, so I like to clear my mind with mainly funny, light, family-style, non-violent shows. Recently, I have been watching these series, “Everwood,” “Heartland,” “Darby and Joan,” “Seaside Hotel,” “Leverage,” and the movie, “Mrs. Harris Goes To Paris.” — **Isabel Mountbatten**

When I’m not outside gazing at springtime’s pink cherry blossoms, my go-to television default is always TCM (Turner Classic Movies) on Spectrum channel 82. Marvelous classics with good introductions. I enjoy Bette Davis in anything.

Confessing to my low-brow habits, during commercials on channel 51 HGTV (“House Hunters International” is my favorite segment), I switch to channel 52 for “Dr. Pimple Popper,” “My 600-lb. Life,” or “90-Day Fiancé.” Shhhh! — **Adrienne Navon**

I’ve been watching human and birdlife in the backyards of my block, the dogwood there in full flower now and the emergence of spring in Central Park. A wonderful time of year! — **Deborah Taylor**

In recent months I enjoyed binge-watching for the first time: “The Gilded Age,” to be able to talk about it with my daughter, who is a fan, and because a friend with a non-speaking role provides gossip from the set; and “Broadchurch,” of which I recently caught a Season 3 episode rerun, and was so impressed I streamed all three seasons. — **Alynn Wesson**

## DONNA LIEBERMAN ON ABORTION RIGHTS

### Where We Are, Where We Have Come From, and Where We Are Going

By Alynne Wesson

Donna Lieberman, longtime executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union in New York (NYCLU), delivered the Women's Alliance's annual Angie Utt Lecture on Women in American Culture on Saturday, March 3rd in the All Souls Sanctuary. Members of the Women's Alliance, the Unitarian Church of All Souls, and the general public were in attendance, and the gist of her message was revealed early on in the her talk's title: "We Who Believe in Freedom Cannot Rest," words from civil rights activist Ella Baker.

"The day after the Trump election," began Donna (as she is addressed by many WA members), referring to her colleagues at the NYCLU, "we asked ourselves how much damage would be done." And then she jumped forward six years: "Even now, after two years of Democratic control (barely) of Congress and the presidency, the Supreme Court [with three Trump-nominated judges] remains the single biggest threat. It has gutted the Voting Rights Act" and done a great deal of damage with regards to guns and public safety through "a dishonest interpretation of the Constitution. But I'm not gonna talk about that." Donna was behind the pulpit at All Souls that Saturday afternoon to discuss abortion rights — what they were, what they are, and what we can do to protect them and make them better.

"Were you around for the November elections?" she asked, describing them as "one big gust of wind from the Right." Losing Mondaire Jones [U.S. Representative for New York's 17th District], "was the worst thing." No, she implied, there is no rest for those who believe in what was promised by *Roe v Wade*. Adding a bit of urgency to her message was the fact that she is in her 70s, has been fighting for women's rights for more than half a century — since well before *Roe* — and had arrived late to the lecture from a meeting in Midtown via an electric City Bike.

"As much as we were in denial that *Roe* could be reversed, we [at the NYCLU] have been working for years" to preserve and improve abortion rights, she said. "We started our abortion project after *Webster*," the 1989 Supreme Court decision that helped enable states to restrict abortion access. She noted that even "in New York, where young people can consent and Medicaid pays for abortion, abortion was regulated by a *panel*, not the Health Department," until New York's Reproductive Health Act of 2019.

Four years later, Donna still cannot rest. "The New York Appeals Court should be a *beacon*. It is not. It is divided 3-3." All the more reason, she said, to vigorously address pending legislation that will affect abortion access in New York. That includes New York's Hospital Transparency Bill, which demands that hospitals reveal what abortion, end-of-life, and gender affirming care they will provide and won't provide. She also gave us the heads-up about the "Privacy Bill" (New York Senate Bill S06224), which was introduced on April 4th, a month after her talk, and that aims to safeguard abortion access in New York through data privacy protection from states with more restrictive abortion prohibitions.

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In a “Believe It or Not” moment, Donna recalled the Comstock laws of 1873, which were used in the 2022 decision by the U.S. Supreme Court to overturn *Roe v Wade*. The laws make it a crime to send information about abortion through the U.S. Mail, and she predicted they would be used again to challenge the U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s 23-year-old approval of the abortion pill mifepristone. (Note: She was right. On April 7th the Comstock laws were used by a Trump-nominated federal judge in Amarillo, Texas, to issue a preliminary injunction suspending the approval. That ruling was halted by the U.S. Supreme Court on April 21st, but an appeal will move forward.)



Donna advised those attending the lecture in person and on Zoom to support the New York State ERA, which many of us did not even know about, and help to make sure it is ratified on the November 2024 ballot. She said it will provide crucial help to preserve women’s rights. “It is a BIG DEAL,” she said, “but it is not yet ours.

“Be not just a critic,” she pleaded, “but a *problem solver*.”

*Coda: In an April 10th email blast responding to the April 7th ruling against mifepristone, and to the journey that decision will take through the appeals process, Donna wrote: “No matter which direction this case goes, I want you to know the NYCLU will keep up the fight to protect abortion care in two keys ways:*

- *“First, we will make sure New Yorkers know about their chance to vote for the Equal Rights Amendment to our state constitution in November 2024. This will enshrine protections for reproductive care at the state level and guard them from political meddling.*
- *“Second, we will fight to ensure that New York meets the increased demand for abortion care in our state. The far-Right’s takedown of Roe has already hurt so many people — particularly women of color, young people, and those in rural communities where abortion care was already limited.”*

*She included links to help us protect abortion access in New York ([action.aclu.org/send-message/protect-abortion-access-new-york](https://action.aclu.org/send-message/protect-abortion-access-new-york)) and pass New York’s Equal Rights Amendment ([nyclu.org/en/campaigns/new-york-must-pass-equal-rights-amendment](https://nyclu.org/en/campaigns/new-york-must-pass-equal-rights-amendment)).*

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Please let us know if you or another Women's Alliance member could use a note in the mail to acknowledge an illness or other important occasion, happy or sad. Contact Corresponding Secretary Carol Schneider, at [nycarol18@aol.com](mailto:nycarol18@aol.com).
- The Women's Alliance sponsors nominees to the Clara Baron Sisterhood (<https://www.uuwf.org/CBS>), which honors Unitarian-Universalist women 80 and over for their contributions to their congregations and communities. Please email Winifred (Winnie) Olsen at [winingo.993@gmail.com](mailto:winingo.993@gmail.com) if you know someone — including yourself! — who qualifies. In March, Sandra Lotz Fisher inaugurated the tradition of an annual luncheon for current WA "Sisters".
- Sandra also suggests signing up for the New York Adventure Club newsletter, which, she reports, "lists such interesting in-person and Zoom programs": [NYAdventureClub.com](http://NYAdventureClub.com).
- If you're new, we're here. Writing for the Alert is a great way to meet people. Contact Alynne Wesson at [alynneesson@gmail.com](mailto:alynneesson@gmail.com).

\*See next page for WA Outing Photos \*

### *Alliance Alert Staff*

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On March 6<sup>th</sup> Sandra Lotz Fisher hosted a rollicking luncheon — the first in a new annual Women's Alliance tradition — for WA members in the Clara Barton Sisterhood.



L to R: Marilyn Mehr, Mary Geissman (back to camera), Winnie Olsen, Sandra Lotz Fisher, Pat Taylor, Rose Patton, Maureen Marwick.



L to R: Mary Ann Van Osdol, Marilyn Reagan, Sheila Darborough, Mary Geissman, Marilyn Mehr, Winnie Olsen.



After the Sunday service on April 16<sup>th</sup>, the Women's Alliance provided refreshments and barista service during Coffee Hour in Reidy Friendship Hall. From l to r: Sally Turner, Joyce Elderfield, Christine Goodwin, Anne Brewer.

WA members met at the Jewish Museum on March 18<sup>th</sup> to view the "The Sassoons" exhibit, which follows four generations of a remarkable Jewish family from Iraq to India, China and England. Afterwards, (l to r) Liddy Paterson, Joyce Elderfield, Betsy Meehan, Susan Schwarz, Carol Magai, Colette Markey, Sally Turner, Victoria Kimbrough, Maureen Marwick (leader), and Sandra Fisher met for lunch.

