



THE ALLIANCE ALERT

Nov-Dec 2024

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



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Christine Goodwin

As we rocket forward towards the end of 2024, I'm looking back at a wonderful year for The Women's Alliance. We have had 16 new members join since January 2024, which adds to the rich mix of many talented and supportive women. Despite limited space, we have worked with All Souls and FastBreak Sports to carve out time in Reidy Friendship Hall for our seven monthly lunch programs. We continue to have interesting ideas for our Monthly Outings, as well as Pop-Ups, and SIGs (special interest groups – music, cinema, safety). If you have an idea for an activity, let us know. You never know if the Bridge Group might be resurrected, or if a Knitting Group will continue.



Please note that for the next few days, the Women's Alliance Award Committee will still be welcoming nominations for the third annual Women's Alliance Award, which will be presented in February. Read more about the award on page 7, and email nominations to Michele Jawin at Michelejawin@gmail.com by November 4th.

Likewise, the Finance Committee is seeking last-minute recommendations for charities you would like to be included in our annual Charitable Giving Program for 2024. The guidelines for qualifying charities can be found on page 8. Email recommendations to Rachel Ziemba at reziemba@gmail.com by November 15th.

Looking ahead, November and December will be busy with our ever-popular Holiday Gift Table scheduled for Sunday, November 24th (see more detail on page 9), and our Holiday Party (members only) will be on Wednesday, December 18th, in the Community Room at 170 E. 87th St. at 4 p.m. More information to follow in December.

There are many committees looking for members, and they don't require an extraordinary amount of time. Please help WA continue as a strong organization. Joining a committee is a good way to get to know other WA members and provide much needed help. Here is a list of current committees in need of your help: Monthly Luncheons, Monthly Outings, Hospitality, Communications, Finance, Membership, and Special Events (Angie Utt Lecture and the Spring Event). Please consider helping out on at least one committee. We are updating the Women's Alliance Handbook and will send it out soon with descriptions of WA Officer and Committee responsibilities.

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!

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 6th – December 11th, 12:45 p.m.

Music Special Interest Group (SIG) 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 the concerts listed below. If you wish to join her, meet in the lobby of Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall (Broadway & 65th Street) at 12:45 p.m. Lunch following the one-hour concert at a nearby restaurant, if you wish. For more information, contact Mary at 646-238-7280, mjgeissman@gmail.com.

November 6, 2024 — Vocal Arts

November 13, 2024 — Piano

December 11, 2024 — Chamber Music

Friday, November 8th, 11 a.m.

WA Monthly Outing to The Morgan Library & Museum,



The exhibit "Belle da Costa Greene: A Librarian's Legacy" traces Greene's storied life, from her roots in a predominantly Black community in Washington, D.C., to her career at the helm of one of the world's great research libraries. Greene was a fashion icon, a socialite, and an astute negotiator and scholar who transformed the Morgan collection into one of the world's great research libraries. Tickets: \$25/\$17 Senior online in advance (themorgan.org/visit) or at the door. Lunch will follow at the delightful Björk Café & Bistro at Scandinavia House, 58 Park Ave. (37th-38th Streets). Please let outing leader Victoria Kimbrough know you will be joining us for the exhibit and for lunch afterwards

at vikifitz2@yahoo.com or 917-608-0004.

Wednesday, November 20th, 12-2 p.m.

WA Monthly Membership Meeting, Reidy Friendship Hall

Lunch (BYO), socializing, a business meeting, our annual election of WA officers, and a speaker: WA Member Julie Wosk, a widely recognized lecturer and museum curator on gender and technology, will talk about "Artificial Women in Films, Art, Literature, Robotics, and More." We'll provide coffee, tea, and a sweet.



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Sunday, November 24th, 12:30-2:30 p.m., following the Sunday service

WA Holiday Gift Table in Reidy Friendship Hall (see also page 9)

A favorite All Souls tradition returns with the WA's pre-holiday sale of gently-used items — this time jewelry, scarves, handbags, and holiday décor. There will be baked goods, too, and proceeds will support the WA's outreach. Contact: Christine Goodwin at Chrisg113@gmail.com or Joan Flesch at JoansBeads@aol.com.

Wednesday, December 18th, 4-6 p.m.

WA Holiday Party!

WA members only. 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., 3rd floor, Community Room.

Thursday, December 19th, Meet at 11:30 a.m.

WA Monthly Outing to American Folk Art Museum



Taking place during the 250th year of Shakerism in America, “Anything but Simple: Gift Drawings and the Shaker Aesthetic” features drawings by mid-19th century women that depart from the simplicity typically associated with Shaker culture. They are regarded as the finest surviving examples of this rare type. Two Lincoln Square. Enter at Columbus Avenue between 65th & 66th Streets and meet in exhibit area straight in from the information desk. There is no formal admission fee for individuals, but we are asked to make a cash contribution on our way in. A late lunch and/or dessert after at the nearby Café Paradiso for those interested. Contact Alix-Marie Hall at AMHAdvisory@yahoo.com or by text only at (917) 621-5495.

Women's Reading Group (SIG)

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

Monday, Nov 4: *The Guernsey Literary & Potato Peel Pie Society* by Mary Ann Shaffer & Annie Barrows

Tuesday, Dec 3: *Women in the Picture: What Culture does...* by Catherine McCormack

Tuesday, January 7, *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom...etc* by Robin Wall Kimmerer

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

MEMBER PROFILE: CHRISTINA ZARCADOOLAS

By Sally Turner



Do you know the difference between a viral and a bacterial infection? Many of us simply do not, according to Dr. Christina Zarcadoolas' research. She's on a mission to change that and a whole lot more - let me introduce Christina. She's a lifelong New Yorker, born and raised in various neighborhoods around the city where there were Greek relatives (and there were many!). She's the oldest of five children and part of a large, extended family. She learned sign language as a child, motivated by her mother, a public school teacher, who suffered a profound hearing loss in one ear. This early experience shaped her awareness of communication challenges and set her on a journey to explore the role of language in fostering understanding across different communities.

Her career began serendipitously as a teacher for deaf students, which sparked her lifelong interest in how language impacts communication practices and gave her firsthand insight into how complex language can seem for learners. This experience profoundly influenced her path, leading her to pursue a PhD in linguistics at Brown University. Over the years, her work evolved to focus on public health communication, environmental studies, and, ultimately, health literacy.

Today Dr. Zarcadoolas is a prominent sociolinguist and a leading expert in health literacy, focusing on how people understand complex health and science topics. What, you may be asking is a sociolinguist? Her work emphasizes how effective communication can help bridge the gap between expert knowledge and public understanding; think of the COVID epidemic and the confusing torrent of "information" given to the public despite cultural and racial differences. Should we wipe our groceries, stand 10 feet away from everyone, get vaccinated, wear a mask, open schools? The list goes on, but most of us recall turning to friends for advice in making these important decisions, and most of them had "heard" something different about methods of staying safe and how to manage a world-wide epidemic. Through research and public health initiatives, Christina highlights the importance of crafting messages that bridge the gaps and empower individuals to make informed health decisions — whether related to chronic illnesses, reproductive choices, or emergency preparedness.

In New York City, one of the greatest cities in the world with some of the best medical facilities in the world, it's hard to understand how we have one of the highest maternal death rates in the United States — women dying during pregnancy and delivery or shortly after. Shamefully in the City, Black women are *ten times* more likely than white women to suffer a pregnancy-related death. And what's even more frustrating is that the vast majority (76%!) of these deaths are preventable. The research shows that bias and racism are the main factors contributing to this very high death rate. One of the central ways we can overcome these barriers is to for women to have good maternal health literacy — to understand pregnancy and develop strong communication skills to advocate for themselves.

For a number of years Christina has been working closely with the international non-profit Saving Mothers (savingmothers.org) to address these maternal health inequities in NYC. She has helped develop training programs and tools for both pregnant women and the frontline community health workers who visit women regularly in their homes. The goals of the organization's mPOWHER program are to improve women's knowledge of maternal health and pregnancy and to help both

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pregnant women and frontline health workers develop strong communication and advocacy skills to reduce barriers of bias and racism.

“What our goal is at Saving Mothers is to strengthen the maternal health literacy of pregnant Black and minority women as well as that of frontline community health workers, so they are better able to identify and advocate more strongly for a healthy pregnancy.”

Christina is currently writing a new book called “The Simplicity Complex: What is the role of Simple in a Complex World.”

What a remarkable life! What a remarkable woman!



WA MEMBER PAMELA PATTON IS ORDAINED

Having voted last February to ordain WA Member Pamela Patton, the congregation of the Unitarian Church of All Souls ordained her as a minister on October 6th. For years, Pamela has served All Souls in many capacities, including Director of Congregational Ministries and occasional preacher. She has been responsible for pastoral ministries and the very popular Buddhism and Mindfulness program, and she has also contributed to Women’s Alliance programming. She will now serve as All Souls’ Assistant Minister.

At press time, a video of Pamela’s moving ordination ceremony in All Souls’ sanctuary was still available on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X15lvVyEw1Y>. The “Act of Ordination,” in which all assembled participated, included, in part, these solemn words:

All Souls Members: We, the members of Unitarian Church of All Souls hereby ordain you, Pamela Patton, into the Unitarian Universalist ministry. Live into this call. May you minister from your whole self: heart and mind, body and spirit. May you always speak the truth as you know it with courage and wisdom, demonstrate grace and gentleness, celebrate the mystery and wonder of life, share in the joys and sorrows of our human condition, embody the living tradition of our faith, and above all, serve the world with compassion and love.

Pamela: It is with joy and appreciation that I take up the ministry to which you ordain me. I vow to serve with a deep sense of obligation and opportunity, mindful of the privileges and responsibilities of ministry. With profound gratitude for all who have walked before me and beside me, I will keep alive the meanings of this service so that my ministry will be enriched by the trust we have given one another. Peace be with you.

For more of Linda Becker’s photographs from the reception in Reidy Friendship Hall that followed Pamela’s ordination, turn to page 12.

GLOBAL SISTERS

WA members attended the Unitarian Women's Convocation in Cluj, near the Ukraine border

By the Rev. Carol Huston

Mary Geissman, Karen Steele, and the Rev. Carol Huston (WA members) attended the Fourth International UU Women's Convocation in Cluj, Romania, September 5-8, 2024. This gathering, organized by the International Convocation of UU Women (ICUW), brought together more than 200 people from Europe, North and South America, Africa, Asia, and Australia. All presentations were in either English or Hungarian, with simultaneous translation available in other languages.



The keynote speaker was Dr. Maureen Porter, who showed us how we can weave a network of mutual support and understanding among women around the world. A panel of Romanian women entrepreneurs talked about their journeys. There was worship every morning and engaging cultural presentations in the evenings. We were all invited to attend the annual meeting of UNOSZ, the Hungarian Women's Association, which also co-sponsored the Convocation.

Each day offered opportunities for small group conversations. In Chalice Circles, we talked about what we found most interesting and/or challenging in the presentations and interactions each day. In Global Sisters Groups, we searched for ways to work for justice.

Many women were glad to learn about the 400-year history of Unitarianism in Hungary and in the Hungarian-speaking area of Romania (Transylvania). Mary and Karen took a tour of Unitarian towns and villages after the CONVO.

In each convocation, justice work focuses on what is most important for the women of the host location. Our Unitarian sisters in Romania are close to a war zone, so much of the discussion centered on war and peace and how to support refugees. During the war in Ukraine, ICUW has funneled more than \$200,000 in U.S. contributions (including money from the Women's Alliance) to a Cluj-based organization called Providence, which has worked with refugees and also taken food, medicine and other supplies into war zones. It was fascinating to hear from the leaders of Providence, including the family from Odessa that settled in Cluj to help direct the work. We were moved by a vocal group from Ukraine. Much of the Global Sisters discussion focused on how we can continue to work with refugees. A closing statement was crafted, asking how women can help the world find peace.

ICUW was founded following the first International Convocation in Houston in 2009, and there were Convocations in Marosvásárhely/Târgu Mureș, Romania (2012) and in Monterey, California (2017). The Fifth Convocation will take place in 4 or 5 years, and we will be looking for a place where UU women can match the eager collaboration with ICUW that was modeled by the Romanian women.

Carol is past president of the ICUW and current chair of its committee on United Nations Advocacy.

Photo above: This small-group ICUW Chalice Circle, with participants from Romania, Kenya, and the United States, met three times. WA Member Karen Steel stands second from the right. For more photos from the ICUW, go to page 10.

NOMINATIONS FOR THE WOMEN'S ALLIANCE AWARD ARE STILL OPEN!

Please submit them by November 4th

The Women's Alliance Award Committee proudly invites Women's Alliance members to submit their nominations for the third recipient of the Women's Alliance Award for Achievement in Social Justice, Human Rights, and Unitarian Universalist Activism to be awarded at the All Souls annual meeting in February 2025. Our past recipients have been Nancy Northrup in 2023 and Dr. Holly Atkinson in 2024.

This is, once again, your opportunity to recognize and honor a woman/gender expansive person for their contributions and achievements in promoting social justice and making our world a better place!

There are many outstanding choices, including those whose achievements have remained unrecognized and underappreciated by the All Souls community! We need your help to celebrate these activists and to place them in the All Souls spotlight they so richly deserve.

Here are the criteria for your nominee:

- The recipient of our Award must be a woman, a gender-expansive person (for example, trans, non-binary, or gender-fluid), or a group of two or more such people (but not an entire organization) who has/have contributed to social justice, human rights, or activism that supports Unitarian Universalist values and principles.
- The nominee must have at least one of the following connections with All Souls:
 - ❖ Current or past member of All Souls Church
 - ❖ Member of the Women's Alliance
 - ❖ Active participant in All Souls programs or related organizations
 - ❖ The award may not be awarded posthumously, or to a member of the Executive Board or the Award Committee.

Please email the name(s) of your nominee(s) to Michelejawin@gmail.com by November 4, 2024.

Please include as detailed a description as you can of the accomplishments of the nominee (even if you think we already know them). We'll read aloud the awardee's accomplishments at All Souls' Annual Meeting, so a 200-300 word description would be perfect.

The Women's Alliance Award Committee includes Michele Jawin, Chair; Sandra Ekberg, Sandra Fisher, and Terry Manzella.

SUBMIT SUGGESTIONS FOR OUR CHARITABLE GIVING PROGRAM

By Rachel Ziemba, Chair, The Women's Alliance Finance Committee

I hope you're having a good autumn! Just a reminder about submitting recommendations of charities that you would like to have included in our annual Charitable Giving Program for 2024. We do have the following guidelines and criteria for your recommendations:

The charities must be 501(c)3 organizations and have a 3-star or higher rating on Charity Navigator, GuideStar, or other similar highly regarded third-party charity rating agency. Organizations must also meet one of the following criteria:

- Programs that provide support for women and girls
- Programs of, supported by, or affiliated with the Unitarian Church of All Souls
- Programs affiliated with the Unitarian Universalist Association, such as the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee and the UU Women's Federation
- Programs that provide support for local neighborhood programs in New York City

Please send your recommendations to me at reziemba@gmail.com by November 15th.

Also, the Finance Committee is looking for new members. Please let me know if you would like to join.

MEET SOME OF OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

Roberta Jacoby is a long time UES resident who attended meditation sessions at All Souls many years ago. The pandemic gave her time to think about what's important, so this year, she came to All Souls services seeking spirituality and connection. Her education background is varied: textile design, fine arts and nonprofit management. Her career was comprised of home furnishing design and marketing; banking; and nonprofit development. The arts and politics are her passions — volunteering for political campaigns from 1968 to the current period; and volunteering for various nonprofit organizations.

Odette Janavel originally served in the Transit Police Department, where she rose to the rank of captain. Transit Police merged into the NYPD in 1995, at which time she was designated Commanding Officer of the Police Cadet Corps. The Cadet program is designed for college students who wish to explore opportunities of a Police career. The students work as paid part-time civilians in police units and receive training and mentoring from the Cadet Corps staff. Many cadets become police officers upon graduating from college.

Anna Klegon was born in Warsaw, Poland and came to the U.S. in 1985 to practice Zen in the Rochester Zen Center. She has been involved with Eastern spirituality for most of her adult life. While living in Newton, Mass., she was a member of a Unitarian Universalist church for several years. Anna worked as a holistic counselor and prison volunteer. She retired before coming to New York in March 2024.

Sandra Ospina came back to settle in New York from her native Bogota, Colombia, in 1991. She has traveled, lived, and worked internationally as an anthropologist and communications major. Honing her studies and worldly experience, she now works as a real estate broker. "NYC is where my parents met almost a century ago. I have continued the relationship with NYC, which I love, and I continue to grow in all ways with it."

Augusta Sterne spent her professional life working in marketing and communications, both in the financial services industry and the nonprofit world. She has been attending All Souls for several years and is a member of the Caring Connections Team.

THE WA HOLIDAY GIFT TABLE IS BACK!

By Joan Flesch

Reidy Friendship Hall, November 24th

12:30-2:30 p.m.

Following the Sunday service

Proceeds will support the WA's outreach



DONATIONS NEEDED:

Jewelry

Scarves (please iron if needed)

Handbags (good condition)

Holiday Décor

Baked Goods

DONATION DROP-OFF:

- Donations to Coffee Hour on **Sunday, November 17th** or to the **WA Monthly Meeting on Wednesday, November 20th**.
- Bring baked goods on the day of the event.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED (sign-up sheets will be sent out via email to WA members at the beginning of November):

Please sign up and join us for any or all of the following:

- Sorting and Pricing — Friday, November 22nd, 11 a.m. in the Forrest Church Gallery
- Set up — Sunday, November 24th, 9:30 a.m. in Reidy Friendship Hall
- Selling — Sunday, November 24th, 12:30-2:30 p.m. in Reidy Friendship Hall (sales will be cash and credit card)
- Clean up — November 24th, 2:30-3:30

QUESTIONS?

Contact Joan Flesch at JoansBeads@aol.com, 917-592-7607

or Chris Goodwin at chrisg113@gmail.com, 646-243-4015

PHOTOS FROM RECENT ACTIVITIES



Carol Huston, a founding member of the ICUUW (see page 6), at the János Zsigmond Unitarian High School in Cluj-Napoca, Romania.



Karen Steele and Mary Geissman at the opening meeting of the Convocation in the David Ferenc Prayer Room of the János Zsigmond Unitarian High School in Cluj-Napoca.



The Unitarian fortified church in Dârjiu, Romania was originally built in the 1200s. It houses beautiful frescoes along with painted and embroidered décor, and it is the home church of Karen and Mary's tour guide (r), a Unitarian minister. Mary is on the left.

First Unitarian Church of Cluj-Napoca, which was built in the late 1700s. On the right is the Unitarian High School



The WA's annual Welcome Back Party on September 17th drew quite a crowd. Photos L to R:

- 1) Attendees enjoying socializing.
- 2) Alix-Marie Hall and her husband Victor Toledo.
- 3) Front: Christina Bellamy. Back: Marilyn Collins (l) and Marilynn Scott Murphy (r).
- 4) Jane Levenson, front. Behind her: Arelis Torres (l) and Greta Andrews.



On September 11th, Christina Bellamy, Sandra Fisher, and Barbara Reed (l to r) caught the scrolling texts of the site-specific exhibition "Jenny Holzer: Light Lines" in the Guggenheim Museum's rotunda. Sandra led the outing.

At the New York Botanical Garden, Susan Hoehn visited "Wonderland: Curious Nature," a botanical exhibit inspired by "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland." Sandra Fisher led a WA outing to the exhibit on October 10th.



All Souls member Cherie Henderson, PhD, introduced us to the growing field of narrative medicine at the WA's October 16th monthly meeting. Her compelling talk was appropriately titled, "What if your doctor listened to you?" (L to r) Teresa Manzella, Mary Ann Lang, and Cherie.



October 6th: The Rev. Pamela Patton with All Souls President Richard Esposito at the reception that followed her ordination. Pamela is wearing her new robe and stole, which was hand-painted to reflect her spiritual journey.



Linda Becker (r) with her unknown pewmate, who snapped a celebratory selfie just after the ordination. Their smiles reflected the general mood in the sanctuary. Behind them is Judith Moldover.



Jane Levenson (behind), Nina Bernstein, and Mary Geissman at the reception in Reidy Friendship Hall.



Hanan Watson (l) and Christine Goodwin at the reception.

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