



THE ALLIANCE ALERT

January-February 2024

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



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Christine Goodwin

Happy New Year! Welcome to 2024!

Thanks to the many members who helped make the Sunday, December 3rd return of our traditional Women's Alliance Holiday Gift Sale and Raffle a success and fun event for the All Souls community. The previous Holiday Gift Sale and Raffle was in 2018. In 2019 we only had the Raffle due to construction at All Souls. We've had no fundraising events since then. In December the event returned to Reidy Friendship Hall and began at its usual time just after the Sunday service. We were able to sell gift items left over from 2018 and had 3 tables for jewelry, 2 tables for fashion and 2 tables for housewares. We also had a very popular Bake Sale with the table strategically placed by the doorway into Reidy Friendship Hall for churchgoers coming down the stairs from the sanctuary. The sale and raffle netted about \$1,600, which will support the Women's Alliance donations to charities. Additional funds for our charitable contributions come from our investment account (see page 5). Prior to the sale, a group gathered to sort and price items for sale. On Sunday morning we had many members setting up the display of gift items. One advantage of being on the set-up crew is getting first dibs on treasures.



Our annual Holiday Party on Wednesday, December 13th at 4 p.m., for members only, was a festive occasion with over 50 members gathering for good cheer. Thanks to everyone who brought in delicious food, sharing favorite holiday treats. Special thanks to Sumi Kubota for her decorating skills and for obtaining some surprises for door prizes. Sumi was the key organizer for the food and she made sure we had enough plates and napkins available, even washing plastic forks when we ran out - thank you, Sumi!

For our January and February luncheons, we are returning to Reidy Friendship Hall. Note the dates and times, and mark your calendars:

- Our January Membership Meeting will be on Wednesday, January 17th at 12 noon.
- Our February Annual Meeting will be in Reidy Friendship Hall on Thursday, February 15th at 2 p.m., with an afternoon tea; FastBreak Sports could not accommodate our lunch on the usual 3rd Wednesday due to their school schedule being fully booked during winter break.

I hope you all had Happy Holidays and now have some quiet time catch your breath and prepare for the year ahead. We look forward to many Women's Alliance activities and chances to connect in the coming 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.

Friday, January 4th, 11 a.m.

WA Monthly Outing at The Asia Society

Meiji Modern: Fifty Years of New Japan

Join WA member and Asia Society popular docent Ingrid Krinke for a tour of "Meiji Modern: Fifty Years of New Japan." This exhibit takes a new look at the art of Japan's Meiji era (1868 to 1912), a time of rising geopolitical tension, upheaval, and uncertainty. Artists of the era manipulated traditional mediums and materials to achieve dazzling effects unseen in previous epochs. Works on display include paintings, prints, photographs, sculptured works, and objects in various media such as enamel, lacquer, embroidery, and textiles. Admission is \$15/\$10 Senior. Meet at 11 a.m. at The Asia Society ([asiasociety.org](https://www.asiasociety.org)), 725 Park Ave at 70th Street. Please let Ingrid know if you are joining the tour and lunch afterwards. She will make a reservation for the group. 917-526-0308 or ikrinke@gmail.com.

Thursday, January 11th, 2 p.m.

Play reading at New York Society for Ethical Culture

"The People Versus Lenny Bruce" with Tony Award Winner James Naughton, followed by a Q&A with the cast, the playwright, and an attorney who helped defend Bruce at his obscenity trial in 1964. (<https://ethical.nyc/back-by-popular-demand-the-people-versus-lenny-bruce-january-11/>).

2 W. 64th St. (at Central Park West). For \$15 discounted tickets contact Mary Geissman ASAP at 646-238-7280, mjgeissman@gmail.com.

Monday, January 15th, 7:30 p.m.

Music Special Interest Group (SIG) at Advent Lutheran Church

"Let Freedom Ring" is a special MLK Day program featuring the Harlem Quartet and Karen Slack, soprano. It brings together music by Beethoven, spirituals, and works by African American and contemporary composers, including a powerful new setting of Langston Hughes' poem "Kids Who Die." <https://www.musicmondays.org/january-2024>. Free. Doors open at 6:45 p.m. at 2504 Broadway (93rd-94th). For more information, contact Mary Geissman at 646-238-7280, mjgeissman@gmail.com.

Wednesday, January 17th, 12-2 p.m.

WA Membership Meeting in Reidy Friendship Hall

Lunch (BYO), socializing, a business meeting, and a speaker. We'll provide coffee, tea, and a sweet. WA member Marilyn Reagan will discuss her family's true crime story, which was the subject of two New York Times bestsellers and two prime-time television miniseries. The Washington Post called it "a Chekovian family tragedy."

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Wednesdays, January 24th to February 21st, 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 Alice Tully Hall 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, migeissman@gmail.com.

January 24th - Wind Orchestra

February 14th - Music for Brass

February 21st - Music for Piano

Thursday, February 15th, 2-4 p.m.

WA Annual Meeting in Reidy Friendship Hall

****Note new date, day, and time for our WA Annual Meeting****

Afternoon tea, time to socialize and reports by WA officers. We'll provide coffee, tea, and sweets. WA member and longtime All Souls congregant Christina Bellamy will be inducted into the Clara Barton Sisterhood, which honors older UU women for their contributions to church and community.



Thursday, February 22nd, 11 a.m.

WA Monthly Outing at The New-York Historical Society

We'll explore the museum at our own pace. Exhibits include paintings from the Hudson River School; a gallery of Tiffany lamps; works by Cherokee artist Kay WalkingStick; Audubon's watercolor models for "The Birds of America"; precious *objets d'art*; a replica of the Oval Office and much more. Admission \$24/ \$19 Senior. Meet at 11 a.m. at The N-YHS (nyhistory.org), 170 Central Park West at 77th Street. Lunch will follow at Pappardella. Please let Outing Leader Susan Schwartz know if you are coming to the museum and also joining us for lunch.

suaneschwarz@yahoo.com, 718-523-1358, or cell 917-679-5810.

Sunday, February 25th, 1-3 p.m.

Angie Utt Lecture on Women in American Culture in Reidy Friendship Hall

Broadway and screen actress Jessica Hecht ("Fiddler on the Roof," "Breaking Bad", "Friends") will talk about theater as therapy for the world today. She co-founded The Campfire Project, which promotes arts-based wellness in refugee spaces around the world and empowers refugees to step into the spotlight as actors. Her talk will be followed by a Q&A and refreshments.



Women's Reading Group (SIG)

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

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

January 2: *Demon Copperhead* by Barbara Kingsolver

February 6: *Infidel* by Ayaan Hirsi Ali

March 5: *The Transit of Venus* by Shirley Hazzard

MEMBER PROFILE: RACHEL ZIEMBA

By Alynne Wesson



A couple years ago Rachel Ziemba made history, of sorts, at All Souls when she struck a blow for diversity and inclusion by joining the church's wine tasting group, The Cork Dorks. But Rachel, who is studying to be a sommelier, agreed to crash the all-male precinct on one condition: that other women be recruited to follow in her footsteps.

"I broke the gender line," she smiles, adding that several Women's Alliance members have, in fact, raised glasses with her as members of the Cork Dorks. Together with Tara McNamara, her sister member of the Cork Dorks, the WA, and the Heart & Soul Charitable Fund Board of Directors, she has also hosted fundraising wine tastings to support Heart & Soul. Several WA members have attended, and she's grateful for the support.

An expert in global economic and political risk, especially as it pertains to the energy sector, Rachel now runs her own firm, Ziemba Insights. In some ways, she comes by her bent towards economics and her love of wine naturally. Her father, William Ziemba, was a noted scholar of quantitative finance, risk control and management science who taught at the University of British Columbia. And he was a wine lover. Her mother Sandra, an artist, is also an economist who, reports her admiring daughter, "taught early classes on what we now call ESG and corporate social responsibility."

Rachel grew up Unitarian in Vancouver, British Columbia, even participating in Coming of Age and teaching church school. She moved to New York in 2006 after attending the University of Chicago, receiving a master's degree in international relations at the University of Oxford, and stints working in Egypt and Canada's capital, Ottawa.

She joined All Souls in 2007, became a member of the Young Adults, relocated to London for several years, but saw All Souls as a touchpoint for her intermittent New York visits. When she returned to All Souls in 2015, she threw herself into volunteering. She ushers for the Sunday service, serves on the board of Heart & Soul and runs its website, and serves on the All Souls Finance Committee, where she advises the board on budget matters. She is also beginning her tenure on the Women's Alliance Finance Committee and is a newly tapped All Souls deacon.

"For a while I resisted the WA," she admits, noting that the group did not seem to include young people and that many of its meetings are scheduled on weekdays. Then she got a little older, her schedule became a little more flexible, and she was persuaded to join the WA by the late Betty McCollum. "I realized," she says, "how much the Alliance does in the church community and beyond, and I wanted to support and be a part of that."

In a marriage of her professional life (you may have seen her on CNBC sharing her insights about energy and critical mineral markets and sanctions policies) and her passion as a wine connoisseur, Rachel recently launched a Substack column, "Journeys in Wine Economics." Those journeys have taken her from the wine scene in her native British Columbia to Spain's most important wine regions, to the wine country of South Africa outside Cape Town. "I'll be thinking about wine and climate change," she writes, "trade issues and just sharing some cool-to-me stories of wine regions."

CHARITABLE GIFTS FROM THE WOMEN'S ALLIANCE

With gratitude to those who submitted recommendations for recipients of our charitable funds, the WA's Finance Committee presents the names of the nonprofits chosen to receive gifts in 2023. Checks were disbursed in December.

The committee received recommendations of six new organizations and three organizations to which we donate both currently and in years past. The committee first evaluated the new organizations against the criteria specified in our Charitable Giving Policy to determine eligibility and then researched those that qualified with Charity Navigator and GuideStar data and 990 filings.

As the WA continues to prioritize organizations to which we have donated previously, the committee also reviewed the current donees to make sure they still qualified. All recipients were approved by the Executive Board.

Many thanks to the Finance Committee, Jane E. Colvin, Chair; Carol Kirkman; Peggy Montgomery; Mary Ann Van Osdol; Rachel Ziemba. Ex Officio: Christine Goodwin, President; Mary Geissman, Treasurer; Karen Steele, Investment Committee.

All Souls — Annual Fund Donation	\$1,500
All Souls — Monday Night Hospitality	500
All Souls — Friday Soup Kitchen	500
UUA Stewardship & Development (Side with Love Action Center)	350
UU Women's Federation Grant Program	250
Center for Reproductive Rights	500
Women for Afghan Women	200
International Convocation of UU Women	200
The Brigid Alliance	200
Heart & Soul Charitable Fund — designated for The New Amsterdam Choir	200
Chancel Flowers Members Memorial (All Souls)	100
WA Women's Award	500
Subtotal:	\$5,000

From the Angie Utt Fund

NY Common Pantry	\$250
Gotham Food Pantry	250
Musica Viva	200
Subtotal:	\$700

New Organizations:

- **The International Convocation of Unitarian Universalist Women (ICUW)** is a nonprofit organization in special consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), focusing on global women's rights and empowerment.

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- **The Brigid Alliance** is a nationwide practical support organization that arranges and funds transportation and other logistical support for individuals who must travel long distances for abortion care.
- **The New Amsterdam Boys & Girls Choir** annually gives 10-15 New York City performances, and has performed in other states as well as in Canada. The choir's membership comes from East Harlem's public schools, and most members come without any musical training.
- **Gotham Food Pantry** is not only a notable organization, but this gift is also in memory of George Collins, a founding member of the organization. It was founded in the summer of 2020 to address soaring food insecurity brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.



WELCOME TO WA MEMBERS WHO JOINED IN 2023!

Nina Bernstein	Melanie Niemiec
Kim Calder	Susan Podbielski
Annette Cohen	Edith Salton
Agnes Horowitz	Judy Samuelson
Michele Jawin	Susan Schwartz
Martina Leonard	Corinne Standish
Mary MacDonald	Jane Watson
Elizabeth Meehan	



** See next pages for photos of some recent WA events **

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PHOTO GALLERY OF AUTUMN ACTIVITIES



September 26th — As the fall season got into full swing at All Souls, the WA and the League presented the entire All Souls community with a Welcome Back Party full of wine, music, and good cheer. The event also celebrated longtime All Souls and WA member Maureen Marwick for her many contributions to the church and the WA. Maureen left Manhattan over the summer for Kendal on Hudson, a retirement community in Sleepy Hollow, but she continues to attend All Souls and WA events. Pictured: (l to r) Sandra Ekberg, who toasted Maureen, and Maureen.

September 26th — Also at the Welcome Back Party, (clockwise from left) Joyce Elderfield, Sandra Fisher, Jane Levenson (standing), Orin Kotula, Sumi Kubota, Robert Dottin, Karen Steele, Sarah Dowson, and Nicolette Carrante Vaughan.



October 30th — WA member Jane Levenson, a lifelong resident of Carnegie Hill, led an insider's tour of the historic neighborhood to see, hear, and even dodge delightful Halloween decorations.



November 20th — Membership Committee Chair Linda Floyd organized an evening gathering for new WA members in the Ware Room. (L to r) Nina Bernstein, Carol Magai, Brigitte Seidel, Roberta Renard, Judy Samuelson, Kim Calder, and Betsy Meehan.



November 29th — (L to r) Judy Staples, Joan Flesch, Teresa Manzella, Nicolette Carrante Vaughan, and Jean Lotz got together to help WA President Christine Goodwin clean out the WA closet and prepare for the December 3rd Christmas sale. Not pictured: Sandra Ekberg, Christine Goodwin, Barbara Reed, Karen Steele, and Sally Turner.



December 13th — (L to r) Sandra Ekberg, Anne Brewer, and Sumi Kubota were part of the set-up team for the WA's Holiday Party, a cheerful potluck event for members only. As the late-afternoon event lingered into the early evening, a number of members who work during the day were able to attend.



December 13th — Also at the WA Holiday Party, (l to r) Teresa Manzella and Winifred Olsen.