

The Women's Alliance of the Unitarian Church of All Souls NYC

2023 Annual Report

2023 WA President's Report

Christine Goodwin

In 2023 we were finally able to resume meeting in person. It makes such a difference to be able to sit together, meet new people, and get to know each other again. Although Zoom was a great way to stay in touch during Covid, that personal connection is not possible.

The annual WA Welcome Back party on Tuesday September 26th, co-sponsored with The League, was a great way to share an evening with the All Souls community.

Due to past difficulty in scheduling our monthly meetings in Reidy Friendship Hall due to the FastBreak classes, we held our October and November meetings at an alternate location, the Community Room at 170 East 87th Street, in Anne Bradley's building. At the October meeting, Pamela Patton presented a poetry exercise that really got members talking and connecting.

Our annual Christmas Party was again held, as we did in 2022, in that same Community Room. The space was comfortable, with couches, tables and chairs, and a fully operational kitchen. Over 40 people attended, brought food to share and contributed to the good cheer. Sumi Kubota helped to organize the food and also provided goodies contributed by Levain Bakery, to distribute as door prizes to lucky recipients.

During the summer of 2023 we tried something new – “Pop Ups” – since WA usually has no events over the summer months. Many members suggested concerts, museums, exhibitions, art galleries, etc for members to meet. Some memorable events were – the “Barbie” movie, Jane Levenson's leading a tour of The American Museum of Natural History exhibit of Minerals and Gems, and the Naumburg concerts in Central Park.

On Sunday December 3rd, we held our first fund raising activity since 2019. We held a Raffle (selling tickets for several weeks prior to December 3rd), and also had teams of members pricing, displaying and selling left over jewelry, fashion and other items left over from the 2018 Holiday Gift Sale. We raised \$1,600 that helped to fund WA charitable donations. The event also brought WA members together on a project and provided a welcome sale for the All Souls community. This also raised the visibility of the Women's Alliance. We will decide if we want to do something similar in the coming year.

Heli Blum and the Program Committee for Luncheons plan interesting speakers. WA members continue to send suggestions to Heli who does an excellent job of following up so that we have been able to enjoy many compelling presentations.

Sandra Fisher and the Outings Committee work to explore many options and have continued to plan enticing monthly visits to museums along with lunch to take advantage of New York City's rich cultural offerings.

Attractive and informative issues of The Alert have been published bi-monthly, featuring member profiles as well as reviews of recent WA presentations. Many thanks to Editor, Alynne Wesson; Copy

Editor, Peggy Montgomery; Production Manager, Christina Black; and many WA members who contribute their writing talents.

WA Committees continue the important work of the Women's Alliance, exploring charitable donations made by WA, developing a 2024 Budget, and reviewing investment policy.

In the March/April 2024 issue of The Alert, there is a listing of WA Officers, Committee Chairs, and Committee members. Thank you to all who give your time and efforts on behalf of The Women's Alliance. I encourage everyone to get involved – fundraising, finance, investing, luncheon speakers, cultural outings, charitable donations, community project, liaison with UUWF, Pop Ups, and Special Interest Groups (SIGs).

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Goodwin, President

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Communications Committee – Annual Report for 2023

The members of the committee are: Lois Coleman, Alynne Wesson, Sandra Lotz-Fisher, Linda Floyd, Christina Black and Peggy Montgomery

The Women's Alliance Directory was re-formatted as an 8.5 x 11 PDF, and was sent by email to the members. They will be able to save the PDF to their devices or print it out, if they want to. A new feature of the directory is an index listing members by their first names, which will help in finding a member's contact information more easily if their last name is not known.

In June 2023, the committee studied the results of the membership survey that had been carried out in the spring of 2023, to see if there were any implications for the work of our committee. The main results that affected us were that nearly half the membership felt that our website was the best channel for communication with and between members, while only 14% approved of using Facebook and 12% approved of using Connex (our Mighty Network private social network - now defunct). The Alliance Alert newsletter got high votes in the survey, with very few suggestions for changes, indicating that Alynne and the Alert team are doing a great job. Members said they were most interested in the calendar of upcoming events, member profiles/obituaries, the President's message, and reports/photos about past outings and events.

The new Women's Alliance brochure was printed in September 2023, and is available in the church vestibule on Sundays. The Communications Committee will update it again soon, as there have been some changes which need incorporating.

Our WA website is <https://www.allsoulsnyc-womensalliance.org>, and is paid for out of the WA General Fund at a cost of approximately \$300 per year. The new All Souls website was launched in December 2023, and the WA will be able to have a few pages of information on that website (allsoulsnyc.org). Lois Coleman has been working on these. The WA will need to decide whether to keep a separate website of its own or not.

The Alliance Alert is published every two months except during the summer, and is sent to WA members by email at the beginning of January, March, May, September and November.

Respectfully submitted by Lois Coleman, chair

**WA Finance Committee
2023 Annual Report**

The Finance Committee met in November to discuss the Women’s Alliance (WA) 2023 charitable contributions and recommended a donation total in line with last year’s contributions. After reviewing recommendations submitted by WA members, the Committee unanimously agreed to continue to prioritize organizations to which we have donated previously, including All Souls and its programs, and added several new organizations. The Committee recommendations, approved by the Executive Board, were for total donations of \$5,000 from the General Investment Fund and \$700 from the Angie Utt Fund.

The Committee also finalized the 2023 financials and drafted a budget for 2024. As part of its budget draft, and following the successful membership fund raising efforts in December, the Committee included a recommendation that the Women’s Alliance continue to conduct fund raising activities to supplement the amounts received from the investment portfolio for charitable contributions and for other activities.

The Women’s Alliance Award subcommittee chose an honoree for the second Women’s Alliance Award for Achievement in Social Justice, Human Rights, and Unitarian Universalist Activism. In accordance with the guidelines, criteria, and timeframes for the Award, it solicited nominations from the WA membership and unanimously selected an awardee who will be recognized at the All Souls Annual Meeting in February 4, 2024.

The Committee drafted revisions to the Charitable Giving Policy, approved by the Executive Board, to bring it into alignment with the Investment Policy that stipulated “annual withdrawals shall not exceed 5.0% of the value of the investment account as of the first business day in January of the current year, unless otherwise guided by the Executive Board” and added information about the WA Award for Achievement in Social Justice, Human Rights, and Unitarian Universalist Activism.

The Committee is chaired by Jane Colvin and its members are Carol Kirkman, Rachel Ziemba, Mary Ann VanOsdol, Peggy Montgomery, and ex-Officios, Mary Geissman, Treasurer, Karen Steele, Investment Chair, and Chris Goodwin, President.

The Women’s Alliance Investment Committee Annual Report for 2023

Investment Committee members for 2023 were Karen Steele, Interim Assistant Treasurer/Chair, Anne Bradley, Marsha Wineburgh, Jane Colvin, and Chris Goodwin (ex-officio). In November 2023 Sally Turner was elected Assistant Treasurer/Chair to be installed at the February 2024 annual meeting.

During 2023, the stock market gained in value, and the WA Investment Fund gained \$11,610 (14.3%) moving from \$81,288 on January 1 to \$92,898 on December 31, 2023. A \$1,000 donation from Joan Brown was deposited in the Investment account, and \$5,000 was withdrawn from the account in December to support Charitable Giving.

The Committee met twice in 2023, February 10 and July 21. Several changes proposed to the Investment Policy Statement in February were approved by the Executive Board in May 2023. In July we moved half of the bond funds (which were declining in value) to a Money Market (cash) fund, preventing some loss.

The committee met January 26, 2024, to review fund performance, consider adjustments in allocation, and to review the Investment Policy Statement for possible revisions (which would be presented to the Executive Board for approval). With over \$7,000 currently in a cash fund, the Committee decided to purchase \$5,000 worth of shares in an equal-weight S & P index fund, Invesco, a transaction made on January 31. Further recommendations were to consider moving our Total Bond fund into short-term bonds, and to continue researching sustainable funds and how they are defined, and to consider whether there is a better alternative than our current investment in IMPAX.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Steele, Interim Assistant Treasurer and Chair of the Investment Committee
February 1, 2024

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Membership Committee Annual Report February, 2023

The Women's Alliance has gained 15 new members from January, 2023 through December, 2023, 132 members in all. They are:

Kimberly (Kim) Calder
Elizabeth (Betsy) Meehan
Annette Cohen
Melanie Niemiec
Judy Samuelson
Michelle Jawin
Susan Podbielski
Edith Salton
Susan Schwarz
Martina Leonard
Agnes Horowitz
Mary MacDonald
Nina Bernstein
Corinne Standish
Jane Watson

In January, 2024 we have gained 4 additional members:

Greta Andrews
Odette Janavel
Suzy Lawrence
Arelis Torres

In September, 2023, Barbara Reed resigned as Chair of the Membership Committee and I assumed those responsibilities. Since then I have monitored the WA email account, sent out informational emails to potential new members, and coordinated with Mary Geissman to add new members to the Communications Committee Membership list. I also hosted a new member meeting in the Ware Room on November 20 and have provided name tags and attendance sheets at our monthly meetings. The next new member meeting will be February 26. Others will be scheduled depending on interest.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Floyd, Membership Chair

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ANNUAL REPORT 2023 SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP (SIG) MUSIC plus

2023 was a busy year for the Music SIG, and we even branched out to include some theater.

The major activity continues to be Juilliard's "Wednesdays at One" free concerts at Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall. Several of us attended eleven of these during the year, often followed by lunch. During the summer we attended four of the concerts at the Naumburg Bandshell in Central Park.

On Martin Luther King Day this year, several of us attended a special "Music Mondays" concert at the Advent Lutheran Church. Music Mondays are free concerts given several times a year. We may add these to our offerings in the future.

During the summer, I decided to use my TDF membership to offer discount theater tickets for a couple of shows. Five WA members, plus a husband, saw "The Doctor" at the Park Avenue Armory. Then, nine members plus a couple of spouses attended "The Savior" at the Irish Rep.

We plan to look for additional opportunities for music (and maybe other) events during 2024.

Respectively submitted,
Mary Geissman

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ANNUAL REPORT 2023 - WA OUTINGS

Submitted by Sandra Fisher, Chair, Outings Committee

Outings Committee: Alix Hall, Susan Hoehn, Maureen Marwick, Carol Magai, Susan Schwarz, Victoria Kimbrough.

The following 11 programs were offered this past year and include the date, venue, name of program, luncheon place, Leader and # of attendees. Outings were held over a variety of days: M, W, Th, F and Sat. to enable w=members to attend.

The most popular programs were the Tour of Gracie Mansion, Asia Society, and the Jewish Museum. Thank you very much to the Outings Leaders who are members of the Outings Committee, plus Joyce Elderfield and Jane Levenson for their time and planning their outings.

Notes:

- 1) The Executive Board passed a resolution that \$300 will be available to the committee each year to help underwrite a program(s) with the aim of making it financially possible for all members to participate. Nothing was spent in 2023.
- 2) We decided no official Outings will be held in July and August; maybe June depending on weather.

January 11 W Alex Katz Exhibition. Guggenheim Museum

Leader Maureen Marwick

Participants: 7

February 9 The Ronald Lauder Collection at The Neue Galerie

Leader: Sandra Fisher

Lunch: Au Bonne Pain, 84th/Madison

March 18 The Sassoons. Jewish Museum

Leader: Maureen Marwick

Lunch: Island Restaurant, 1305 Madison Ave. bet 92-93rd.

Total 12

April 13 The Comparative Hell of Eastern Religions

Guided Tour with WA member/docent Ingrid Krinke

Registrar: Sandra Fisher

Lunch at Dallas Bar-B-Q: 7 for lunch

Participants for museum: 11 women and Alix's husband Victor. Sandra Fisher, Maureen Marwick, Susan Hoehn, Ingrid Krinke, Judy Staples, Jane Colvin, Barbara Reed, Patricia Glennon, Dixie Goss, Carol Magai, and Sally Turner

May 10 Tour of Gracie Mansion.

Tour arranged by Joyce Elderfield.

Registrar and Lunch at the home of Sandra Fisher.

Participants: 21 Sandra Fisher, Alix Hall, Linda Becker, Anne Bradley, Peter and Alice Clark, Sarah Dowson, Joyce Elderfield, Penny Gibson, Michele Jawin, Victoria Kimbrough, Katherine Kleber, Jean Lotz, Carol Magai, Maureen Marwick, Judith Moldover, Melanie Niemiec, Winifred Olsen, Susan Schwarz, Brigitte Seidel, Alynne Wesson

June 14 Tour of President Theodore Roosevelt's home. ([www.nps.gov.thrb](http://www.nps.gov/thrb))

28 E 20th St. National Historic Site.

Leader: Alix Hall.

Lunch: Daily Provisions Union Square

Participants: 7 Betsy Meehan, Alix-Marie Hall, Ingrid Krinke, Maureen Marwick, Terry Manzella, Chris Goodwin, and Mary Ann Von Osdol.

September Yonkers Walk along the Hudson River and Sculptures of the Enslaved.

Leader Alix Hall.

Participants: Sandra Fisher, Susan Schwarz, Mary Geissman, Kim Calder, Lois Coleman, and ++

October 6 Morris- Jumel Mansion Tour and Sylvan Terrace, northern Manhattan.

Leader Victoria Kimbrough

Lunch: Hilltop Park Alehouse

Participants: Total 7. Sally Turner, Sandra Fisher, Mary Geissman, Sylvia Dones (Victoria's from Mexico City), Melanie Niemic, Brigitte Seidel.

October 30 Halloween Decor Walking Tour of Carnegie Hill

WA and The League members

Leader: Jane Levenson

Participants:

November 10 "Judy Chicago: Herstory" (newmuseum.org),

Leader: Sandra Fisher

Lunch: Brown bag at the museum

Participants: 5 Sandra Fisher, Martina Leonard, Mary Geissman, Kim Kleber, Linda Becker

December 9 "This is New York: 100 Years of the City in Art and Pop Culture"

Museum of the City of New York

Leader: Susan Hoehn

Lunch: Café at the museum (very reasonable)

Participants: 5 Susan Hoehn, Sandra Fisher, Martina Leonard, ++

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Women's Alliance Monthly Meetings and Special Events 2023

January Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, January 18th, 2023, @ 12:00 – 2:00pm, via Zoom

Meet Dr. Chris Rogutsky:

New Leader, New Ideas

Dr. Rogutsky, Doctor of Educational Leadership from the University of Pennsylvania, Masters in Counseling and Special Education, training in Art, Social Work, as well as Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion topics. She has served 25yrs in education, serving as a principal of the Long Island High School for the Arts in addition to nearly two decades as a professor within the graduate counseling programs at Manhattan College.

Dr. Rogutsky has a track record as a "turn around" leader revitalizing the High School she lead. She is passionate about removing obstacles to learning, art, culture, nature, walking, living a healthy lifestyle, identifying ways to move forward when challenges arise and of course helping children develop a resiliency of spirit. ([suggested by Heli Blum](#))



The 2023 Angie Henry Utt Lecture

On Women in American Culture

with Donna Lieberman

Saturday, March 11th, 2023 @ 3-5pm in Sanctuary; 3:30-5pm on Zoom

We Who Believe in Freedom Cannot Rest

Donna Lieberman, The Executive Director of the New York Civil Liberties Union since 2001 and founder of its Reproductive Rights Project. Among the NYCLU's accomplishments during her tenure are reforming stop & frisk; serving as co-counsel to Edie Windsor in the lawsuit that struck down the Defense of Marriage Act; and securing passage of the Reproductive Health Act and Paid Family Leave.



Ms. Lieberman talked about the state of our freedoms and what is needed to maintain them. ([suggested by Mary Geissman](#))

March Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, March 15th, 2023 @ 12-2pm Hybrid or Zoom

Immigrant, Radical, Notorious Women of Washington Square Park

Joyce Gold ; Author and contributing writer to multiple publications, podcasts, radio, TV, historian, tour guide (Joyce Gold History Tours) and teacher of Manhattan History at the New School of New York for the past 40 years. ([suggested by Anne Brewer](#))



April Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, April 19th, 2023 @ 12-2pm, Hybrid or Zoom

Medical Aid in Dying

Corinne A. Carey, Esq ; Senior State Director for New York & New Jersey Compassion & Choices

Nancy Willie-Schiff, PhD ; member of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany, Co-Chair of End-of-Life Choice Task Force, Coordinator of New York UU Network for Medical Aid in Dying, volunteer with Compassion and Choices New York

Moderator: Arelis Torres ; educator, advocate, writer, Science teacher in NYC DOE for 3 decades (now retired), advocate for Hispanic community and community at large on health, LGBTQ, government policy and human rights, and a member of All Souls ([suggested by Karen Steele](#))

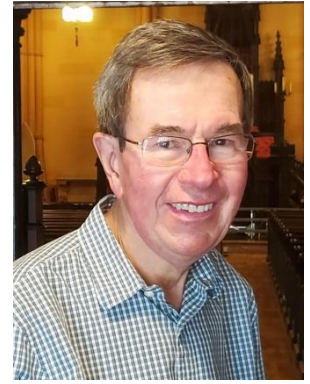


May Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, May 17th, 2023 @ 12-2pm Hybrid, In Person And on Zoom

Sponsoring Immigrant Families: Experiences from the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Brooklyn

Tom Check, member of First Unitarian Universalist Brooklyn since 1989, Active member of its ***Immigrant Solidarity Committee*** since its founding 2017, also member of Facilities Committee. Tom retired from a long career in healthcare information technology in 2019.



The Immigrant Solidarity Committee originated spontaneously in 2017 in concern over increasing pressure on new and recent immigrants, especially from Central America. The Committee has continuously adapted to meet the evolving needs of immigrants since then - from very short-term (~3days) housing at the church when immigrants first arrived in New York City to longer-term (up to a few years) housing in congregants' homes, to helping new arrivals get oriented and enrolled in school, Medicaid, and other programs; to providing clothing and toiletries to connecting our new friends with pro bono immigration attorneys or paying for private attorneys. The Committee members are currently working extensively with three families who arrived NYC last fall from Venezuela via Texas - including an infant born here in December 2022 and another born here in March 2023 to get their footing in their new city. While the City provides housing and meals in family shelters, the Committee meets myriad other needs including help with filling asylum applications within their first year in the US followed by legal work permit five months after filing for asylum. The major focus is helping them navigate the legal maze of immigration in their crucial and time-pressured first year.

(suggested by Heli Blum)

Women's Alliance 2023 Spring Event

Saturday, May 20th 2023, @ 3-5pm

In Reidy Friendship Hall & on Zoom

Light refreshments are served

Care of the Earth: A Biblical Perspective

David Robb; an Author, Ordained Minister, Licensed Psychotherapist and for 25 years a member of ministerial staff at All Souls Church



A number of commentators have held that the biblical traditions of the West, perhaps by virtue of major misinterpretations, have contributed significantly to helping provoke this current world-wide ecological crisis. David will lead us on a fresh look at the creation narrative in the opening Book of Genesis to seek to understand its original intent, and whether it contains a perspective that might support our efforts for more creative action on behalf of the environment. (suggested by many members)

October Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, October 18th @ 12-2pm in person

170 East 87th Street; Community room, 3rd floor

Connection

Pamela Patton, Director of Congregational Ministries at All Souls NYC. Pamela has a Masters of Divinity Degree from the Union Theological Seminary, MA in Education and Computing from Teachers College and B.S. in Mathematics from Tufts University.



She is both an Unitarian Universalist and Buddhist and leads guided meditation and book discussions related to Buddhism among many other roles.

Join us in connecting! Inspired by some short video clips Pamela will guide us in connecting with each other about experiences that have shaped us.

November Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, November 15th @ 12-2pm in person

170 East 87th Street, Community room, 3rd floor

Challenges I Want to Meet as an Artist

Gail Rodney, Artist .Gail studied art at the National Academy of Art's School of Fine Arts in her 30's. She was a founder of the GoGA group of artists associated with the Gallery of Graphic Arts, a Yorkville institution, and exhibits frequently there as well as at the Martha's Vineyard Art Association on Martha's Vineyard. She maintains a studio in Long Island City and Chappaquiddick. She works in oil, pastel, watercolor, and collage and is now preparing for a show in Paris in June 2024 .



Come join us to learn about the challenges of being an artist and how Gail is rising to meet them.

HOLIDAY PARTY

Gotham, 170 East 87th Street, Gotham Community Room, 3rd floor

RSVP AND LET US KNOW IF YOU ARE BRINGING A SAVORY OR SWEET ITEM

[\(Mary Geissman, Anne Bradley, Sumi Kubota\)](#)

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ANNUAL REPORT 2023 - TREASURER

Following the annual meeting on February 15, 2023, Karen Steele, the outgoing treasurer, president Chris Goodwin and I visited TD bank to transfer signatures on our account. Karen then gave me the treasurer's files and checkbook.

Through online banking, I monitor the WA checking account, and during 2023 I found two major issues.

1. As part of 2022 charitable giving, a check for \$450 was issued to Monday Night Hospitality on Nov. 30, 2022. This check was not received and a replacement check was issued. The replacement check was cashed. However, when I reviewed the bank account I discovered that the original check was cashed on May 1, 2023. I obtained a copy of the check from the bank and sent it to Heart and Soul, which is overseeing the finances for Monday Night Hospitality. Heart and Soul reimbursed the Women's Alliance.
2. In September I discovered unusual charges to the VISA debit card associated with our account. The TD bank included a debit card that I had used to deposit checks in the bank's ATM machine. I notified the bank and immediately cancelled the debit card. The bank investigated the charges and eventually they were reversed.

After the charitable giving amounts for 2023 were approved I mailed the checks to the recipients. As of now, all of these checks have been cashed

As of February 8, the bank balance is \$5,038.74, and the checkbook balance is \$3140.57. Two checks are outstanding.

Respectively submitted,

Mary Geissman, Treasurer