

# First Unitarian Women's Alliance

## PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES

### 2020-2021



Service • Friendship • Enrichment

IN MEMORIAM

To our Alliance member who died in the past year



Marilyn Murphy Meardon

A hymnal donation was made to the church in loving memory  
of Marilyn from the Women's Alliance.

**Cover Photos:**

*Top Row left:* October Speaker: Lisa Maloney, Educator, Audubon Society

*Top Row right:* November Speaker: Alan Rosenberg, Editor, *The Providence Journal* with Nancy Safer

*Middle Row left:* December Speaker: Wendy Schiller, Professor of Political Science, Brown University with Susan Fisher

*Middle Row right:* January Speaker: John Marion, Executive Director, Common Cause with Nori Duncan

*Bottom Row left:* February Speakers: Barry Press and Tanya Anderson, Living Literature

*Bottom Row Right:* March Speakers: Barbara Barnes and Joelle Kanter of Jane's Walk with Temple Fawcett

## About The First Unitarian Women's Alliance

Established in 1882, The Women's Alliance is unique among the organizations of the First Unitarian Church in that it has been an autonomous society of dues-paying members and has its own endowment. Many of its members have played leading roles in education, suffrage, and social services.

In 2014 The Women's Alliance became an affiliate of the church and the name was changed to The First Unitarian Women's Alliance. It remains focused on benefiting women and children.

The mission continues to be:

- to serve the community, both locally and at large,
- to provide friendship and spiritual and cultural enrichment for its members, and
- to support the church and its denomination.

Activities of the Alliance include:

- Monthly programs for members and friends
- Fundraising through the sale of organic coffees and cheeses, an indoor yard sale; and other activities
- Annual donations to selected charities
- Hymnal donations in honor of deceased members
- A theater event with The Players at Barker Playhouse
- A Facebook Group with the Women's Association from our partner church in Transylvania

The Alliance meets on the first Monday of the month from October through May, with an end-of-year outing in June. The business meeting and monthly programs featuring engaging speakers will be held via Zoom to all Alliance members.

Membership dues (\$35) support the programs and business expenses of the Alliance; fundraising profits, after expenses, benefit selected charitable organizations that support women and families.

## Meetings

Business Meetings*	10:00 am
Programs* (note time change for 11/2)	11:00 am
Luncheons** (\$10)	12:00 pm

\*During this period of isolation and restrictions, Alliance members will receive invitations to join the live monthly business meetings and programs via Zoom. The Alliance will be recording the program portion (with the speakers' consent) and will share it with the church community on the church's YouTube channel and at the Women's Alliance page on the church website. The YouTube link will be announced monthly in the church newsletter.

\*\*Our Alliance-catered luncheons are suspended until the pandemic restrictions are lifted.

## Programs

### October 5, 2020      UU the Vote

Speaker: Lisa Garcia-Sampson

UU the Vote is an effort to activate Unitarian Universalists across the country in voter engagement work in 2020. Lisa leads the UU the Vote campaign in North Carolina, where she lives and serves as the Executive Director of the UU Justice Ministry of North Carolina.

*Lisa Garcia-Sampson joined First Unitarian in 2011 and went on to receive a master of divinity from Boston University. She is currently in Preliminary Ministerial Fellowship and will be ordained by our congregation in the spring. While at First Unitarian, she co-led the pledge drive from 2013 to 2015 and served for one year on the Ministerial Search Committee.*

### November 2, 2020      What We've Learned from Covid-19

Speaker: Dr. Michael Fine

*NOTE: Dr. Fine's talk will begin at 10:45.*

Dr. Fine will discuss public health in the time of Covid-19 – and what the global pandemic has taught us about ourselves.

*Dr. Michael Fine has been a family practice physician for more than 40 years and was Director of the R.I. Department of Health from 2011 to 2015. He has written short stories, novels, and public policy books, including Healthcare Revolt: How to Organize, Build a Healthcare System, and Resuscitate Democracy – All at the Same Time. The Providence Journal called his novel Abundance, set in Rhode Island and Liberia, "(s)uavely and elegantly fashioned. . . . A thinking man's thriller that makes Fine the Ocean State's own John le Carré."*

**December 7, 2020    The Well-being of Rhode Island's Children:  
What the Data Say**

Speaker: Stephanie Geller

Each year Rhode Island KIDS COUNT charts improvements and declines in the well-being of Rhode Island's children, with a core focus on equity. Stephanie will present data from the 2020 *Rhode Island Kids Count Fact Book* related to family and community, economic well-being, health, safety, and education, highlighting disparities in outcomes for children of color.

*Stephanie Geller is the Deputy Director of Rhode Island KIDS COUNT, where she has worked since 2008. She holds a bachelor of arts from Wellesley College and a master's in education from the Harvard Graduate School of Education.*

**January 4, 2021        The History and Future of the Immigration Crisis**

Speaker: Rodrigo Pimentel

During the past 20 years, immigrant communities have been under attack. Multiple administrations have militarized and expanded immigration enforcement, resulting in 5.5 million deportations, while efforts to pass comprehensive immigration reform have failed. How did we get here in the first place, and where do we go now?

*Rodrigo Pimental is a DREAMer and a beneficiary of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. Rodrigo's commentary has been featured in Al Jazeera, The Guardian, and The Providence Journal. Rodrigo previously worked for the Latino Policy Institute and currently attends the University of Rhode Island.*

**February 1, 2021     "Let's Play Game"**

Speaker: Rev. Justin Lester

Justin will explore how using recent gamification frameworks can cross generational, gender, and social barriers within churches and communities to create a community where we experience a true love ethic and culture.

*Rev. Justin Lester met Jesus for the first time at age 12 and has been meeting him ever since. He has an extreme love for people, ministry, and coffee. He attended Marquette and Vanderbilt universities, earning two bachelor's degrees and two master's degrees. Currently he is a doctor of ministry candidate at the Boston University School of Theology. Ordained in the Baptist church, he is currently assigned as Pastor at the Congdon Street Baptist Church in Providence.*

**March 1, 2021        Seeking Racial Justice and Reconciliation**

Speaker: Debra Sharpe

Debra will discuss the work of the Providence-based Center for Reconciliation, founded in 2015 as an initiative of the Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island. Through a wide range of programs about the history and legacy of slavery, the slave trade, and the construction of race and racial

identities, the Center seeks to be a catalyst, collaborator, and convener of churches, schools, and other nonprofit organizations in our community.

*Debra Sharpe is the Executive Director of the Center for Reconciliation and has a strong interest in public history focusing on slavery and race in America. She holds a master's degree from the University of Illinois in human development and psychology and previously worked for several national nonprofit organizations.*

**April 5, 2021                      Singing as a Spiritual Practice**

Speaker: Beth Armstrong

We will interactively explore the benefits of group singing and the many physical, spiritual, and psychological benefits of this simple means of expression. Beth has been singing for as long as she can remember and is surprised that her last 40 years have been devoted to encouraging others to sing as well.

*Beth Armstrong is music director of two local, nonauditioned community choruses. She served as music director at the Unitarian Church of Concord, New Hampshire, for 16 years and as the sabbatical music director at First Unitarian in fall 2019. She taught public school music for 12 years and has sung in chorales, choirs, septets, and community theater productions, most of her life. She thinks she is lucky to have made a career from the thing she truly loves.*

**May 3, 2021                      Observations of a Documentary Filmmaker**

Speaker: Kendall Moore

Kendall will speak about her experience as a documentary filmmaker, share examples of her work, and discuss how she uses her films in her antiracism activism.

*Professor Kendall Moore is an award-winning documentary filmmaker and a professor in the departments of Journalism and Film Media at the University of Rhode Island. Before joining the faculty at URI in 2003, she worked as a television journalist, focusing on medical, health, race, and environmental issues.*

**June 7, 2021                      Annual Outing at The Rhode Island State House**

Speakers: Department of State Library and Public Information Staff

Tour at 11:00a; catered lunch follows at the State House

Rhode Island's State House, built between 1895 and 1904, has the world's fourth largest self-supported marble dome. We will learn more about our capitol building and our state's unique history and visit the Charter Museum and Gift Shop. We hope to have a few elected officials join us for lunch.

*Wheelchairs are available free of charge inside the upper parking lot entrance to the building. All floors in the building are wheelchair accessible.*

*Parking is available in the lower parking lot; entrance on Smith Street.*