Membership is defined by being a member of a group. I have belonged to many organizations in my 71 years which required me to recognize that I have certain obligations and criteria to be a member, i.e., dues, adhering to a mission statement, volunteering, mentorship, and saying, "yes," as much as possible. Many have rules of some sort which are the backbone of any organization.

That being said, I remember hiking in Forest Park last summer with the Trails Club of Oregon and another member, Nancy Panitch (Co-President of Alliance), started walking with me. She reminded me that I was looking to connect and participate more with the First UU church members. The job of membership chair had opened up and she thought I would be up to it. Well, I have a habit of saying yes (it’s my mantra of life). "SAY YES, NOT NO, TO LIFE."

This journey, like all journeys, comes with a learning curve. Luckily there is an experienced team to teach and support me in the responsibilities that came with being Membership Chair. There are seven positions that come under membership and these people have responsibilities that go on all year.

Database Management: Petie Padden places all members for 2019-2020 in a database which then becomes your printed directory.

Joys and Concerns: Jill Duren shares all the concerns and joys of the Alliance members with us.

Memorials: Lynne Bacon (who is currently taking a break) and I (Sue Holmes) along with other volunteers, give support to Alliance members’ families in celebration of life service memorials held at the church.

Transportation: Mary Post assists with transport of members to our Alliance luncheons.

Correspondence/Cards: Jill Duren supports membership through notes/cards/letters of congratulations, well wishes, and condolences.

Birthdays: Fern Momyer recognizes members’ birthdays at each monthly meeting.

Online directory: Nancy Panitch and Maryann Roulier are bringing us into the 21st century.

Being membership chairperson has indeed given me many rewards of friendship and continues to teach me that it’s important to show up! Thank you for allowing me to serve.

In Fellowship,
Sue Holmes,
Membership Chair

MEMBER IN PROFILE: Daniel Baxter

Born in Detroit, Daniel Baxter is a second generation American, culturally Jewish, whose grandfathers each escaped revolutions in Russia and Poland. As a youth Daniel spent a lot of time at Wayne State University where he picked up the sport of fencing. He was captivated! The art of fencing became a practice that later opened Princeton University’s doors to him. While a student, Dan participated in Princeton’s fencing program and graduated with a major in Psychology.

Dan began his work career in New York with the prestigious Ogilvy and Mather advertising agency. Subsequent jobs took him to San Francisco, Canada, and then to Portland where he and his team at Sandstrom Partners design brands, including naming and packaging and related marketing materials. (Note the elegant packaging for Steven Smith Teamaker.) Daniel leads the strategy department; he “loves to solve problems.”

He arrived in Portland 24 years ago, previously married (and widowed) with three children. His marriage to Bridget in 2013 added two more children into the blended the
MEMBER IN PROFILE: Mary Post

Mary Post truly speaks – and acts – for all of us in Alliance. She says, “Alliance energizes me. Lots of movers and shakers here!” True to the mission of our Alliance, she devotes quiet commitment to each task, always willing to accept one more.

Recently, Mary chaired the Allocations committee. Currently she serves as our transportation chair and also volunteers with Cares and Concerns, “one of the essential services for a large church.”

Mary was born in Iowa and remained for one year in college until she moved to California to be near her sister. At Cal State Northridge she achieved a Bachelor’s degree in Sociology, and moved to Fresno to complete her Masters’ in Social Work. She participated actively with the Fresno Unitarian Church. Even post-retirement Mary continues to pursue many outlets in her “passion for social justice;” as an independent contract worker in Alaska for returning service members; as a ready volunteer near Ground Zero offering her assistance to the Red Cross. Current efforts include political activism. She canvasses voters in her Tualatin community and protests potential environmental hazards with 350 PDX.

Mary is one tough lady; until she was 62 years old, she navigated this world with just one hip socket! When medical technology created titanium replacements, Mary signed up; when the doctor unwittingly broke her pelvis, she continued to work until the break was repaired. Unsurprisingly, modern medicine has enabled Mary to “find a new life. I was so excited to walk (mostly normally), I wore it out in seven years.” One successful new part encouraged others. Now she sports two new shoulders and two new knees. Don’t mess with Mary!

Settling first in Portland to be near her daughter and two grandchildren (her son lives in Seattle), Mary joined First Unitarian in 2006. Settled now in Tualatin with her partner, she joined the Alliance in 2013. True to her exemplary work ethic, Mary will continue to contribute her handiwork to the Alliance Greens Sale – brewing her famous plum jam, sewing tall stuffed dolls for the Boutique and continuing to knit socks and scarves with the Yarn Crafters. “What I like about the Alliance… the volunteers really work!” There’s Mary’s modesty for you. Mary is a fine example for us all.