



Barb, with family members Will, Nancy, Carl, Christine and Anne.



Barb, with friends from Women's Night Out (WNO), an informal group of friends who supported Barb through her last year of life. WNO began having monthly get-togethers in 1982 after a celebration dinner hosted by Barb at her home on Crooked Lake. Absent: Ellen Dubuque

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Unity Church-Unitarian
733 Portland Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55104
unityunitarian.org | Livestream: bit.ly/bstromermem

In Memoriam



Barbara Thompsen Stromer
April 4, 1941–March 7, 2024

Perhaps all the dragons in our lives are princesses who are only waiting to see us act, just once, with beauty and courage. Perhaps everything that frightens us is, in its deepest essence, something helpless that wants our love.

— Rainer Maria Rilke

Memorial Service for Barbara Thompsen Stromer
Friday, April 26, 2024 | 1:00 p.m. | Rev. Lara Cowtan, Officiant
**Please rise in body or spirit.*

GATHERING MUSIC Ahmed Anzaldúa, piano

TOLLING OF THE BELL

PRELUDE

INVOCATION AND CHALICE LIGHTING Rev. Lara Cowtan

WORDS ON GRIEF

*HYMN Morning Has Broken #38

*UNISON READING Earth mother, star mother #524

READINGS In Times of Silver Rain by Langston Hughes
Ode to the Elderly by Gertrude Baker Mealey Danielle Stahley
Joel Kvamme

COLLAGE OF VOICES Rev. Lara Cowtan
Kathy Lamp

INTERLUDE

EULOGY

MUSIC I'll Fly Away (Albert Brumley) Women's Night Out Singers
Ross Johnson, guitar

CLOSING WORDS

POSTLUDE

Barbara Thompsen Stromer was born in Minneapolis on April 4, 1941, to Mercier Thompsen Peterson and Dwayne Thompsen. She lived most of her life in St. Paul, where she passed away peacefully in her home on March 7, 2024.

A hallmark of Barbara's life was her commitment to improving the lives of women and children. After completing her undergraduate and graduate work at the University of Minnesota, she began her career as a social worker and went on to hold pivotal human services leadership positions at both the state and regional level. She mentored and guided many of her colleagues toward significant leadership roles in human services, health care, and beyond. She later became the proud owner of the Dale Street Greenhouse and was embraced and enriched by the people of Frogtown, where she was honored for her work providing the area new services and helping to build a vibrant community.

In retirement, Barbara became an English language teacher in Mexico and embraced the culture and people she met with the same passion. Barb valued the opportunities she had to live in and travel to many places and to have had many varied and challenging work and volunteer experiences. She was grateful for all that her family, friends, neighbors, colleagues, clients and acquaintances taught her and the ways they enriched her life, just as she touched so many throughout her life.

Barbara is preceded in death by her parents, former husband Carl, son Willson, daughter Anne, grandson Joseph, and grandparents, aunts, uncles and some cousins on both sides. She is survived by her daughters Christine Klusovsky of Marietta, GA, and Nancy Gatz of Dickinson, ND; grandchildren and great grandchildren; and siblings Hilary Alphin and Sidney Wolf of Arlington, TX, and Forrest Peterson of Emporia, KA.

Barbara left this world with special thanks for her partner of the last years, Donna Cronin, and over 40 years with her Women's Night Out friends. Barb's family and friends are grateful to Highland Path staff and HealthPartners hospice staff for the wonderful care she received.

Thank you for being here today. Please join Barbara's family and friends for a reception in Parish Hall after the service. In addition, you are invited to select a CD as a remembrance of Barb from her impressive and diverse collection from one of the baskets near the doorway.