

Susan Claire Williams, 66, of Rochester, MN, and formerly of Lompoc and San Mateo, CA, passed away Wednesday evening, August 28th, 2024, in Mayo Clinic Methodist Hospital in Rochester, with her loving husband, Gerald, at her side.

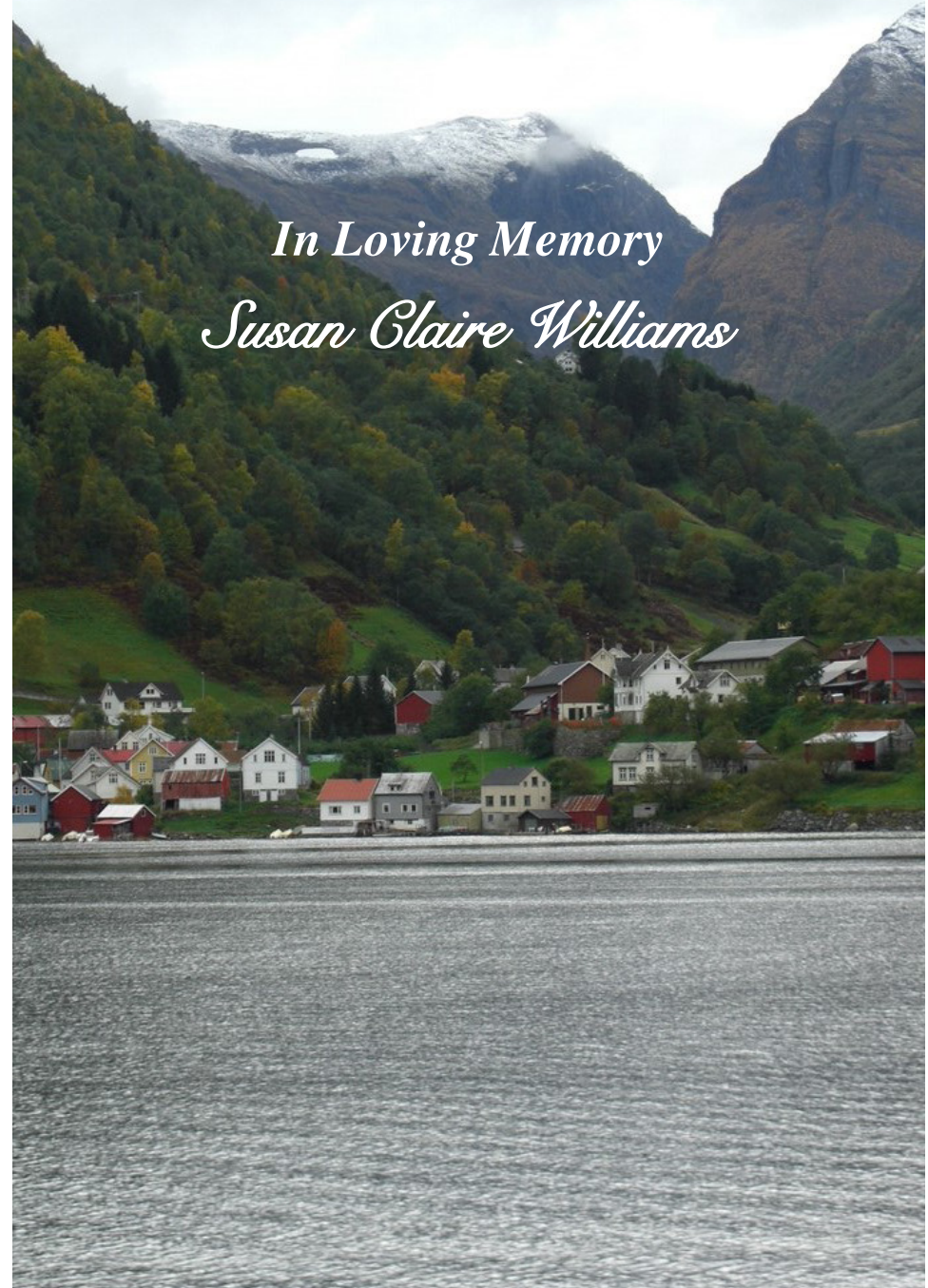
Susan was born in Thief River Falls, MN on August 16, 1958, the daughter of Richard and Coreen "Connie" (Strand) Nelson. She grew up in Crookston, MN and nearby Grand Forks-East Grand Forks, and her father was an officer with the Mayville, ND Police Department for several years. After her graduation from High School in 1975 Susan attended Mayville (ND) State College where she received her Bachelor's degree. On January 28, 1983 she married the love of her life, Gerald "Jerry" Dennis Williams, in Grand Forks, ND. Jerry was an airman stationed at the Grand Forks Air Force Base and for a time the young couple made their home on the Base before settling into their home in Grand Forks. Their union would be blessed by the birth of a precious daughter, Melissa, known throughout her life as "Missy". During these years Susan furthered her education, earning a Master's degree in English from the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks, followed by a second Master's degree in Counseling from North Dakota State University in Fargo. Susan was then employed by Sacred Heart Catholic Church and Sacred Heart School in East Grand Forks.

In 1989 Jerry was transferred to Vandenberg Air Force Base at Lompoc, CA. Susan continued her long and rewarding career as an educator with the Lompoc Unified School District, specializing in Adult Education. She eventually rose to the role of Principal. Additionally, she was also responsible for establishing a Nursing Program and a Pharmacy Tech Program in the community. Susan's passion was reaching out to those in need of new challenges, be they very young or quite elderly. She often visited hospitals and schools accompanied by "Kazy the Camel", a real life, honest to goodness camel, whose personality brought delight and cheer to all they both came in contact with. Of special note, Susan and Kazy were once featured on a Discovery Network airing. Susan also sponsored a "Literacy Bus" which she had local high school students paint purple. She also had them retrofit the interior, turning it into a computer lab on wheels for those seeking their first introduction to the world of computers. In addition to this she was the creator of "Reading Plus" designed around sharpening reading skills, once again for all ages. Both her Literacy Bus and Reading Plus programs received national recognition. Susan was an active member of the Rotary Club in Lompoc and Chairperson of the Younger Older Conference. In 2012 Susan and Jerry moved further north to San Mateo, near San Francisco, where she continued her life's work until retiring in 2015, bringing to a close a wondrous 28-year career. In 2017 Susan began attending USC at Los Angeles where she studied to become a Physician Associate. After graduating in 2020 she and Jerry moved back to Lompoc where Susan began her practice at the Community Health Center (CHC). In early 2023 she was diagnosed with cancer and began receiving chemo treatments at Rochester's Mayo Clinic, which meant traveling back and forth from Lompoc every month, spending 4 days at Mayo. Due to the severity of her worsening health, in November of 2023 Susan and Jerry relocated to Rochester and were currently living in an apartment building known as "Red Forty-Four".

Susan filled her life with reading, cooking, knitting, swimming, biking, traveling with Jerry, and being Mom to her several pet dogs over the years. Jerry and Missy were absolutely the greatest source of joy in her life. She couldn't have been prouder to be the wife of a career Air Force veteran, and mother to a daughter who was a US Navy veteran herself and was following in Susan's steps while preparing for her own career as a PA.

Susan leaves to mourn her passing Jerry, her beloved husband of 41 years; their daughter, Melissa "Missy" Williams of Shelby Twp, MI; sister, Star Jasperson of Cheyenne, WY; 3 nieces and a nephew: Heidi Ames of Gansevoort, NY, Nikki Peterson-Stringer of Cumberland Furnace, TN, Anna Peterson of Cheyenne, and Danny Jasperson of Cheyenne; and former brother-in-law, David Peterson of Thief River Falls, MN. From Jerry's side of the family Susan is survived by 2 sisters-in-law, Sharon Nolan of Medina, OH and Karen Wittgate of Akron, OH; 2 nieces and 2 nephews: Bret Nolan, Darci Eaves, Justin Nolan, and David Frederick; and many friends from near and far. She was preceded in death by her parents, Richard and Connie Nelson; parents-in-law, Donald and Mollybelle Williams; and through the years her pet fur babies: Chloe, Luna, Zoe, Bella, Cali, Scruffy, and Shasha.

May God richly bless the memory of Susan Claire Williams.



IN LOVING MEMORY

Susan Claire Williams

August 16, 1958 - August 28, 2024

The Funeral Service Honoring Susan's Life

Saturday, September 7, 2024 at 11:00 a.m.

Stenshoel-Houske Funeral Home

Crookston, Minnesota

The Rev. Michael Osaki, officiating

Special Recorded Music

"Amazing Grace"

by Chris Tomlin

"Shall We Gather at the River"

by The Kyle Family

"Battle Hymn of the Republic"

by Lee Greenwood

Graveside Service

Oakdale Cemetery

Crookston, Minnesota

We would like to express our sincere thanks to everyone for your very kind expressions of sympathy and for your presence, whether in person or spirit, as we Celebrate the Life of our Wonderful Wife, Mother, Sister, and Aunt.

With Grateful Hearts

Jerry - Missy - and Family



God saw she was getting tired
And a cure was not to be,
So He put His arms around her
And whispered, "Come with Me."

With tearful eyes we watched her suffer
And saw her fade away,
Although we loved her dearly
We could not make her stay.

A golden heart stopped beating
Hard working hands to rest,
God broke our hearts to prove to us
He only takes the best.

