

## Getting to Know Susan K. Hylan



Sue grew up in Nashua, New Hampshire with three younger brothers. Her family attended the Unitarian Universalist Church in Nashua, where her father served on the Board of Trustees and her mother taught Sunday school. What a great combination! Not all of Sue's relations were Unitarian Universalists. Instead of following his family to the Universalist Church, Sue's grandfather attended Good Shepherd Episcopal Church in Nashua and her Canadian aunt and uncle attended the Anglican Church in Canada throughout their lives. They became a strong influence in Sue's spiritual journey.

An adventure seeker, Sue decided to move to Seattle. She attended the University of Washington where she completed her teaching degree — and met Stephen Hylan, her future husband. After graduating, Sue accepted a 6<sup>th</sup> grade teaching position with the Concrete School District. Over spring break in 1979, Sue and Stephen married and built a house on the beautiful Skagit River. And few years later, the traveling Hylens decided to move to Bainbridge Island where they raised their 2 daughters, Catherine Arnett Hylan & Stephanie Anne Hylan.

In her twenties, Sue had experienced an indefinable feeling, a need for something more. That feeling waned, but again, later in life, Sue felt that she needed something more, though she didn't comprehend exactly what that *something more* was. But in 1987, when her daughter Stephanie began attending St Barnabas Day School, Sue began attending St Barnabas Church. The beautiful historic sanctuary and the warm, welcoming congregation immediately drew her in. She quickly engaged in a variety of activities and studied for her confirmation. She had found that *something more* she had been seeking for so long.

In 1986, Sue began to attend the Bainbridge Island Writers Workshop, where poetry was taught by Bob McAllister and Nancy Rekow. In honor of her 50<sup>th</sup> birthday, she self-published *Double Exposure*, a book of poems and photographs. Sue continues to write every morning and attends weekly poetry workshops. Her poems have appeared in Ars Poetica Exhibitions, Poetry Corners and in 2019 Spindrift, a Shoreline Community College literary publication.

Along with writing and taking photographs, Sue worked for the Bainbridge Island Metro Park & Recreation District as the Arts & Cultural program and events manager. Throughout her thirty-year career she organized & implemented a wide variety of art & cultural classes, workshops and events. She also worked with the special needs population, ensuring that park programs met the needs of participants of all abilities. Who knew about Sue's career or her poetry? Wow!

Sue enjoys serving at St Barnabas as a Liturgy Reader at the 8AM service as well as taking photos for the St Barnabas Church community when she can. She also attends the Tuesday Morning Centering Prayer and workshop led by Rev. Patricia, which continues to strengthen her

spiritual journey. Sue especially appreciates the warm, welcoming spirit of Reverend Karen with her amazing energy, sensitivity to the needs of so many, and creative spirit; always surprising and inspiring our St. Barnabas congregation.