

**SoCal Lutherans
Reconciling Works -
Southern California Chapter**



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About The Clarence E. Anderson Peace and Justice Award

Clarence E. Anderson was a long-time member of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church in Glendale and a strong supporter of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church in North Hollywood. As gay man, Clarence felt the sting of exclusion and prejudice throughout his life. Thanks to the ministries of Bishop J. Roger Anderson, Pastor Dwight Johnson, and Lutherans Concerned - Los Angeles (now SoCal Lutherans), Clarence found a church that loved him unconditionally. Clarence lived a simple life of quiet generosity and at the time of his passing in 2001, he left most of his estate to Lutheran congregations and organizations committed to the full-inclusion of LGBTQ persons. In honor of Clarence' commitment to the work of peace and justice, the Synod Council of the Southwest California Synod and SoCal Lutherans created "The Clarence E. Anderson Peace and Justice Award."

April 5, 2025

It is our privilege to announce the 2025 Clarence E. Anderson Peace and Justice Award recipient is **Mary Ann Horton.**

Peace and Justice in turbulent times often calls for trailblazing leaders committed to raising awareness, fostering inclusion, and boldly sharing about their own stories. Mary Ann Horton is just such a leader in Southern California.

Mary Ann grew up in the Pacific Northwest and moved to San Diego in 1971 where she quickly fell in love with California. Mary Ann studied computer science before computers would become a commonplace fixture in our lives. She earned a BS from the University of Southern California, an MS from the University of Wisconsin, and a PhD from the University of California at Berkeley where she developed the binary code for email attachments. Her work on the frontiers of computer science paralleled her work on the frontiers of the movement for LGBTQIA+ inclusion.

In Ohio, she founded the first transgender support group called The Crystal Club in Columbus. In the 90s she helped Lucent become the first large company to adopt transgender-inclusive language in their Equal Opportunity nondiscrimination policy. Mary Ann has gone on to champion trans-inclusive protections for many other Fortune 500

companies. She helped to lead the Human Rights Campaign to include Transgender Health Benefits in their Corporate Equality Index.

In 2022 Horton published *Trailblazer: Lighting the Path for Transgender Equality in Corporate America*, which details her work bringing awareness and protections for transgender individuals like herself.

Mary Ann is a proud member of First Lutheran Church of San Diego where she has been at the forefront of the congregation's efforts to create a welcoming place for all LGBTQ people.

In 1998, Mary Ann became the first transgender member of Lutherans Concerned, now known as ReconcilingWorks. Her personal journey helped to educate and transform hearts within the church. She recognized that while many Lutheran congregations were welcoming to gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals, transgender people were often overlooked. She worked to bridge the gap between understanding and acceptance, often being the only transgender voice present in important conversations.

Through her presentations, panels, and direct engagement with church councils, she helped to foster a deeper understanding of gender identity and expression and the importance of full inclusion. Her pivotal commitment to justice and equality led to the inclusion of transgender individuals in the “Reconciling in Christ” program.

Mary Ann’s life is a powerful example of how faith and advocacy can come together to create meaningful change, inspiring others to work towards a more just and loving community.

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