



2023 Hal Brook Perry Distinguished Alumni Award  
**The Rev. Maureen “Mo” Doherty, 2001**

Episcopal priest. Mother. Trailblazer. Counselor. Rule breaker. Servant Leader. Tireless disciple.

Early on you joined the Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati and graduated with a degree in sociology from the College of Mt. St. Joseph in 1968. For 10 years you had a varied career as a group parent, a teacher and a juvenile parole officer in Ohio. After leaving the order, you married and had your son Kevin. Your journey took many turns, including the realization that you were gay. After overcoming many barriers, at the age of 53, you made your way to Seminary of the Southwest. Yours was the first class to have a majority of women and you earned your Master of Divinity in 2001.

After graduation, you were placed at St. Aiden's in Tulsa, Oklahoma, under the supervision and Episcopal authority of the Rt. Rev. Robert Moody. You found work at the AIDS Center in Tulsa and continued to figure out life as a gay woman and clergy person. It was made clear to you that gays needed to be quiet but even after that ongoing struggle, you were ordained a Deacon. At the end of that year, Bishop Moody told you that there was no place for you to work in Oklahoma and you needed to look elsewhere. You found your way to St. Andrew's in Waverly, Iowa. Shortly after your arrival you were greeted with newspaper articles and letters asking St. Andrew's to fire you. At a parish meeting, you said you would leave, but the members of the congregation assured you that you were the right person for the job. St. Andrew's became your teacher, just as you would become the teacher and mentor to others. You were ordained by Bishop Moody as there was not a Bishop in the Diocese of Iowa at that time. When there were major floods in Waverly, you worked tirelessly assisting others with meals, clothes and places to stay. You began a campus ministry with a one-hundred-dollar budget and for the first time, students from Wartburg College began attending St. Andrew's. You, along with others from your parish, were able to open the campus and community's eyes to the reality of gay life.

St. Andrew's sent you to the University of Northern Iowa to do campus ministry. You set up a welcome table for lunch in the Student Union and students came seeking your guidance and advice. You attended various group meetings including LGBTQ and were welcomed there just as you would later welcome others who sought you out for your ministry. You became a member of the Campus Ministry Board and began having services with a colleague from the Methodist ministry known as The Treehouse even though this was against the rules. You were praised for the joint work that you did together by faculty members and other ministers. You met your spouse Joan on campus in 2004 and she joined the Episcopal Church in 2005. You and Joan were the second gay couple married after legalization in Black Hawk County in 2019.

Along with your work in the church, you also worked for a funeral home and developed a grief support group while there. Your calling has led you to facilitate other groups for those who have lost loved ones.

Said the Very Rev. Cynthia Briggs Kittredge, dean and president of Seminary of the Southwest, “Since her time here as a student, Maureen has modeled the courage, compassion, and gentleness of Christ. Through her faithful ministry, her witness and presence have moved the church to more closely resemble God's dream. I am grateful to have known Maureen these many years as a colleague and friend.”

In gratitude for your diligent service and commitment to the communities you serve, Seminary of the Southwest and the Southwest Alumni Association are honored to present to you the 2023 Hal Brook Perry Distinguished Alumni Award.

Austin, Texas

November 15, 2023