The Hope Center

The Hope Center came into being when the congregation of the former All Saints' Church joined forces with St. Mark's, Buffalo and moved there. The building left behind came to be used to host 12-step recovery meetings of all types, 24 hours per day, seven days per week. At that time (about twelve years ago), in order to pay the bills, the Diocese rented the building to a start-up church called The Well, which also used the space for a number of years. A few years ago, it became impossible for both the 12-step recovery meetings and The Well to use the same space because both were growing so much. Bishop Garrison invited The Well to find a new space and ever since then, the recovery ministry of the Hope Center has continued growing.

A few highlights:

1. Currently, there are 34 meeting per week; in any given week, it is estimated that somewhere from 600 to 800 people are in the building. We work with five Amherst Courts, one Buffalo court, and the County Probation department for community hours. Were it not for all these 'donated' hours of labor, we also could not survive. The building is always clean and the grounds are well-kept thanks to these workers. In any given year, over 500 hours of supervised community service are completed at the Hope Center. The Hope Center itself has no payroll.
2. However, there is one staff member, and that's me. I am paid by the Diocese for one unit per week. As Director of the Hope Center, a position I have held for over 12 years, I coordinate the care of the building, the scheduling of meetings and special events, and just generally make sure 'the trains run on time.' Much of my ministry involves dealing with people who call wanting to know not only about the Hope Center but about 12-step recovery in general. Not a day goes by that I don't receive at least one or more calls from individuals or their families. At least 50% of the calls I receive are from people who are in active addiction who are looking for help and support in the community. Our Diocese can and should be proud of the fact that the name of the Hope Center is well-known in the recovery community and that people understand that the Episcopal Church cares and offers a ministry and free help to those who are seeking recovery. Often, I make referrals to other agencies, because The Hope Center is NOT a treatment program.
3. Coming up, on October 3rd, is the first annual Walk for Recovery. The sponsors and organizers have asked that it originate and end at the Hope Center. At the end of the walk, the names of those who were lost to addiction in the previous year will be memorialized.

If you have any questions about the ministry of the Hope Center, addiction or recovery, feel free to give me a call at 716-440-2950 or check out our website at hopecenterbuffalo.org where you will find our up-to-date meeting schedule hosting: Alcoholics Anonymous, Cocaine Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, Overeaters Anonymous, Al-anon, Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous, and Adult Children of Alcoholics Anonymous.

The Rev. Canon Barbara Price