

Recovery Ministries of the Diocese of New Jersey Report to the 225th Annual Diocesan Convention

Over the past year a number of significant goals have been achieved. First and foremost was the inaugural Diocesan Recovery Sunday held at Trinity Cathedral. We appreciate Bishop Councill's leadership, support and encouragement to make this an annual event. To that end, we have lined up excellent guest preachers for 2009 and 2010 Recovery Sunday services. We hope these events open the doors of communication as we continue to seek to nurture a healthier environment for all while addressing, in a spirit of love and pastoral response, the very real vulnerabilities of those affected by the disease of alcoholism and/or other drug dependency.

To achieve another goal of increased recognition and education, we offer resources from the two workshops given at *Equipping the Servants* in the fall of 2007. The first workshop: *Introduction to Addiction and Recovery* was set up to define the disease of addiction, particularly with respect to alcohol and other drug dependency. It assists in the recognition of symptoms, describing effects of the disease on the family unit and offer information on treatment options and support agencies as well as resources for family and friends. The second workshop: *Recovery in the Congregation Setting* was set up to provide specific information on initiating and supporting the work of recovery in the congregation setting. It covers the establishment of 12-Step groups, nurturing healthy collaboration with established groups, instituting a Recovery Sunday in the congregation and the benefit of active participation in Episcopal Recovery Ministries (at both the diocesan and national levels). Our diocesan policy on the use of alcohol in the congregation setting is also available to all for ready reference.

Our involvement in these areas has connected us with a much greater network of Episcopalians who share our work. We were pleased to have two of our members represent us last spring at the national gathering of Episcopal Recovery Ministries. Finding solidarity with other clergy and lay colleagues in recovery ministries has been most helpful. The exchange of experience and ideas that takes place in such a setting is uniquely valuable. And this year has led to our water bottle distribution with the slogan "Have a drink on us."

We once again benefited from two retreats designed to give us the chance to examine our work as a committee more deeply. Among the topics we have begun to explore are ways in which we can be more helpful advocates for timely intervention, the use of alcoholic and non-alcoholic wine at communion and the celebration of a diocesan recovery day. At our 2008 convention we continued to display and award a number of alternative baskets of cheer. We are also grateful for the opportunity to once again offer an open 12-step meeting for any and all in recovery during the hospitality hour preceding our convention banquet.

As always, we are pleased to provide information, prayer and referral for any congregation or individual within our diocese seeking to address issues of dependency and recovery. Feel free to call on any of us listed below.

In Christ's Healing Love,

Cathy

The Rev. Catherine Brunson, Dcn, Chairperson
Recovery Ministries Committee

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