

A New Ministry for Syracuse: The Diagnostic Clinic and Counseling Center

By Amy Mangram



In September 1964, St. Paul's launched an innovative new ministry with the opening of a weekly diagnostic clinic and pastoral counseling center. During the mid twentieth century, many churches were recognizing the growing need for counseling and community support services and were exploring ways to meet those needs.

Located at the heart of Syracuse and serving as a visible presence in the city, St. Paul's was uniquely positioned to offer a drop-in counseling center. The center welcomed all people regardless of age, race, or denomination and was open every Thursday morning free of charge.



The Rev. Harold Hutton and the Rev. Hugh Replogle were available to provide pastoral counseling, and each session concluded with a brief prayer service. While the center's primary focus was spiritual guidance, the leaders recognized that many personal struggles were connected to broader challenges in daily life. To better serve those seeking help, St. Paul's consulted with community leaders and social service agencies throughout the city and county, enabling the church to connect individuals with additional resources when needed.

The counseling center reflects St. Paul's long tradition of adapting its ministries to meet the changing needs of Syracuse residents. By combining spiritual care with practical community support, the church sought to extend Christ's compassion beyond its walls and into the everyday lives of the people it served.