

Name of your group:

“First Ave. Big Book Discussion Group”

Current meeting Location and Time:

Wesley United Church, Welland ON. (downstairs room)
8:00pm-9:00pm EST

When did your group start?

Our group first started as a “meeting” on the first Monday in March of 1997. We were a “closed meeting” for one year, then became a “closed discussion group”. Ivan and the Rose City Group sponsored us and gave us our AA literature package. Since we officially became a group in March of 1998, this is the month and year we chose to celebrate our anniversary based on.

Who were the members that started your group?

The two founding members were Willie C. and Jerry B.

Is there any specific reason your group started?

Willie and Jerry were members of the United Group at the time, and had no intention of leaving the United Group. However, the Monday night meeting became quite popular with alcoholics, so between them, they decided to fully commit to the First Ave. Big Book Discussion Group

Is there any specific history about your group that you would like to include?

The reason the group is at Wesley United:

The Minister Rev. Kim had approached Willie on multiple occasions to ask what happened to the AA meeting previously there on a Saturday night, and asked if they'd start another meeting. He was quoted “..the congregation at Wesley United would like to see AA back at their church”. Monday night was settled on the evening that worked best for all.

The first year was very slow for the group. Jerry and Willie had common supporters (Keith, Mike S and Joe M) – but there were others, who didn't share as much harmony with the members, and had odd ideas of how an AA group should run. Some hoped it would become a Big Book study group, however, most members wanted to focus the discussion around Alcoholism and the Big Book.

One night it happened; members were all sitting around quietly, looking at one another, and started to read a few pages out of the Big Book, and passed it around.

Members loved the format, and to this day 1st Ave Big Book Discussion has run on the same format.