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Finding Home and Hope at Beacon of Hope Shelter

Beacon of Hope in Fort Dodge was built to fill a gap that once left men with nowhere to turn. Founded in 2010 by Steve Roe, the shelter began with a clear purpose. “Our local community didn’t have anything for men,” says Brian Bidleman, executive director of Beacon of Hope.

What started as the purchase of an old Masonic temple quickly became something much larger. With support from local churches and community members, the building was transformed into a 54-bed shelter that now serves men from across a wide rural area. For many, it is the only option. Beacon of Hope is not designed to be just a place to stay. “We really like to call ourselves a restoration center,” Bidleman says. While emergency beds are available, the focus is on longer stays that give residents time to address the issues that brought them there.

At the center of that process is faith. The shelter operates as a Christian-based organization, where residents are invited into daily services, Bible studies, and ongoing conversations about purpose, accountability, and change. “We share Jesus with them twice a day,” Bidleman says. “We want them to stay long enough to get it.”

The goal is not just stability, but transformation. Staff work with men through addiction, mental health challenges, and repeated cycles of homelessness, encouraging them to slow down and confront the deeper reasons behind their circumstances.

The shelter’s approach is shaped by the people who run it. Bidleman and his leadership team bring decades of sobriety and firsthand experience with homelessness. “We’ve actually physically lived through or experienced” many of the same struggles, he says, allowing them to speak with credibility and understanding.

That lived experience, combined with a faith driven mission, creates an environment rooted in both accountability and compassion. “We tell our guys we love them almost every day,” Bidleman says. “It’s important to feel loved.”

Since stepping into leadership in 2022, Bidleman has worked to strengthen the organization while staying grounded in its core purpose. Plans are underway to expand services, including the development of a women and children’s shelter, extending that same model of faith centered care to more people in need.

At its core, Beacon of Hope is about breaking cycles and pointing men toward a different path. “Our whole goal is to really keep them from being a revolving door,” Bidleman says.

For Bidleman, that mission is clear. It is about more than providing a bed or a meal. It is about meeting people where they are, and walking alongside them, a change that is possible through both support and faith.

Visit the website to learn more about Beacon of Hope Shelter, <https://beaconofhopeshelter.com/>

