

# *The Alternative*

## Reading-Berks County Intergroup Newsletter

December 2023

[ReadingBerksIntergroup.org](http://ReadingBerksIntergroup.org)

The Alternative is published monthly by the Reading-Berks Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous.  
Serving Districts 33, 66, and 67 of Delegate Area 59 - Eastern Pennsylvania. Reach us by mail at  
PO Box 12157, Reading, PA 19612, or you can email us at [Alternative@ReadingBerksIntergroup.org](mailto:Alternative@ReadingBerksIntergroup.org)

**HELP IS AVAILABLE 24 HOURS A DAY, 7 DAYS A WEEK CALL 610-373-6500**

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The Reading Berks Intergroup meets on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month in person at One United Church of Christ, 1730 New Holland Rd, Reading PA 19607 at 7:00 PM. All members of Alcoholics Anonymous are welcome and encouraged to attend.

### *"Responsibility Declaration"*

"I am responsible. When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there, and for that, I am responsible."

## Step Twelve

**“Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.”**

**PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE** shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics. It works when other activities fail. This is *our twelfth suggestion*: Carry this message to other alcoholics! You can help when no one else can. You can secure their confidence when others fail. Remember they are very ill.

Life will take on new meaning. To watch people recover, to see them help others, to watch loneliness vanish, to see a fellowship grow up about you, to have a host of friends-this is an experience you must not miss. We know you will not want to miss it. Frequent contact with newcomers and with each other is the bright spot of our lives.

## Tradition Twelve

**“Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.”**

The spiritual substance of anonymity is sacrifice. Because of A.A.’s Twelve Traditions repeatedly ask us to give up personal desires for the common good, we realize that sacrificial spirit-well symbolized by anonymity-is the foundation of them all. It is A.A.’s proved willingness to make these sacrifices that gives people their high confidence in our future.

## Concept Twelve

**“The Conference shall observe the spirit of A.A. tradition, taking care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds and reserve be its prudent financial principle; that it place none of its members in a position of unqualified authority over others; that it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote, and whenever possible, substantial unanimity; that its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy; that it never perform acts of government; that, like the Society it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action.”**

## Morning Prayer

“God, please direct my thinking and keep my thoughts divorced from self-pity, dishonest or self seeking motives. Please keep my thought life clear from wrong motives and help me employ my mental faculties, that my thought – life might be placed on a higher plane, the plan of inspiration.”

*A Special Thanks to the Following Groups for their Contributions to  
Support Reading-Berks Intergroup:*

8:15 AM Monday to Friday Group  
Courage to Change Group  
Great Fact Group  
Leesport Group  
Saturday AM Women's Group  
The Tribe

*Announcements*

**Toot-a-Loo John Memorial**

Saturday December 2<sup>nd</sup>

Approximately 11 AM (will follow the Co-Ed Spiritual Breakfast which starts 9:30 AM)  
EDI, 1300 Hilltop Rd, Leesport PA 19533

**Nolde Forrest Group is celebrating their 34<sup>th</sup> Anniversary & the Christmas Holiday**

Wednesday December 27<sup>th</sup>

Food and Fellowship start at 6:00 PM and the meeting starts at 7:00 PM

(Will be at least one speaker. Please bring a covered dish or dessert if you can, and if not, just bring yourself. They'd love to have you!)

One United Church of Christ, 1730 New Holland Road, Kenhorst PA 19607

**The Hilltop Group is Celebrating their 34th Anniversary**

Tuesday January 9<sup>th</sup>

5:30 PM – Food, Fun, and Fellowship; 6:30 PM – AA Speaker from Area 59

The Bridge Fellowship Church, Route 724, Shillington PA

**The Underground Garage Group is having a Christmas / New Year's Celebration**

Sunday January 7<sup>th</sup>

The Bridge Fellowship Church, Route 724, Shillington PA

# *Announcements (continued)*

## **Volunteers needed for the Prisons Commitment (especially Women's)**

Please contact Robbie K (Men's) or Susan W (Women's)

## **Volunteers needed for Bridging the Gap (especially northern Berks County)**

Please contact Kent S plus there is a flyer with a QR code that will get you signed up

## **Volunteers needed for the AA Hotline (especially Spanish Speaking volunteers)**

Please contact Bill M

## **The Reading-Berks Intergroup Public Information committee is looking for volunteers to help in their mission**

Email the chairperson for info at [PublicInfo@ReadingBerksIntergroup.org](mailto:PublicInfo@ReadingBerksIntergroup.org) or join us the 4th Tuesday of every month at 6 PM at One United Church of Christ before the monthly Intergroup meeting

## **Visit the Reading Berks Intergroup page (<https://readingberksintergroup.org/>)**

Plenty to check out:

- Information and links for the New Grapevine App for your smart phone
  - Updated and latest version of the RBI Structure Manual
- New AA Hotline tear-off forms available for all members to print, use, and distribute
  - Printable schedules in 2 different sizes
  - Links for activities around our area and beyond
- Link to "We" in both English and Spanish (Your Area 59 quarterly newsletter)
  - Link to the Grapevine Podcast
- Plus the most recent info on Area 59 and NERAASA and on GSO and the General Service Conference

### **"Alternative Advertisements"**

All A.A. Events, Notifications, Announcements and/or Testimonies are Welcome!

Please email all requests to: [Alternative@ReadingBerksIntergroup.Org](mailto:Alternative@ReadingBerksIntergroup.Org)

# *Service Commitments*

## **“Become Your Home Group’s Intergroup Representative (IGR)”**

In areas where Intergroups have been formed such as Berks County, the AA Groups elect an Intergroup Representative and an Alternative, who participate in the monthly Intergroup business meetings with other elected Representatives. These meetings are held on the 4th Tuesday of each month at One United Church of Christ, 1730 New Holland Rd, Reading PA 19607 at 7:00 PM and accessible via Zoom at ID 95087075328 with Password SoberRBI. The meeting starts at 7:00 PM and is usually over by 8:00 PM.

**For information on commitments, please contact Mark S or visit the 12<sup>th</sup> Step Work Thru RBI section of the RBI website:**

<https://readingberksintergroup.org/12-step-commitments-2/>

(It is under the Member Services section from the main page)

### **Current Active Commitments:**

Haven Behavioral Health

Wernersville

Teen Challenge

(We will be removing the details on commitments from the Alternative due to fact the schedules often change as well as the particulars for access to the facilities. For example, Clare of Assisi is having none this coming month.

Mark will provide schedules and the details to the groups that take the commitment in question.)

## *Meetings in Need of Support*

### **Mustard Seed Group**

In Person

Saturdays at 6 PM

St Mark's Lutheran Church

1015 Windsor St, Reading PA 19604

They are looking for new members to share their Experience, Strength, and Hope with them!

### **Friday Blandon Group**

In Person

Fridays at 8 PM

Maidencreek Church

261 Main St, Blandon PA 19510

Has Your Groove Turned Into a Rut? Change your Routine and Join Us!

### **St Gabriel Beginner Meeting**

In Person

Tuesdays at 7 PM

St. Gabriel's Episcopal Church

1188 Benjamin Franklin Hwy, Douglassville PA 19518

Come Share Your Experience, Strength, and Hope!

### **Books and People Group**

In Person

Mondays at 6:30 PM

Mountain View Church of God

1255 Hampden Blvd, Reading PA 19602

Change up your routine and check out a new meeting!

## *Meetings in Need of Support (continued)*

**Walnut Street Group is in need of support at their 8 PM meetings every day of the week**

In Person

8:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Former EDI Clubhouse

647 Walnut St, Reading PA 19601

Please bring your Experience, Strength, and Hope!

### **The Topton Group**

In Person

Tuesdays at 7 PM

Saint Peter Church

122 West Franklin St, Topton PA 19562

Open Discussion / Speaker meeting

## *Recent Meeting Updates and Changes:*

Tuesday Meeting “**Off the Beaten Path**” has been removed from the meeting schedule effective September 26<sup>th</sup>

**The Friday Kutztown Group** is now a Grapevine discussion meeting  
(Fridays at 7 PM at Trinity Lutheran Church at 357 W Main St, Kutztown PA 19530)

**Women’s Hope with AA** now meets at 7 PM every Friday night at the same location in Douglassville,  
downstairs in the chorus room  
(Fridays at 7 PA at St. Gabriel's Episcopal Church at 1188 Benjamin Franklin Hwy, Douglassville PA 19518)

**Women’s Courage to Change** has relocated.  
(Mondays at 6:30 PM - hybrid at Advent Lutheran Church at 16 Telford Ave, West Lawn PA 19609; Zoom  
meeting ID 357 377 581, password 756726  
Fridays at 6:30 PM - Zoom Only, meeting ID 357 377 581, password 756726)

**The Nolde Forest Group** has changed their meeting time effective November 8th to 7:00 PM  
(Wednesdays at 7:30 PM at One United Church of Christ at 1730 New Holland Rd, Reading PA 19607)

**You Are A Miracle** WILL NOT MEET Monday December 25<sup>th</sup>. Meetings will resume the following Monday.  
(Mondays at 5:30 PM at St. Columbkil Church at 200 Indian Spring Rd, Boyertown PA 19512)

**The next monthly Reading-Berks Intergroup meeting is 7:00 PM Tuesday,  
December 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at One United Church of Christ, 1730 New Holland Rd,  
Reading PA 19607.**

# Meetings & Groups-1

Words can be found in any direction (including diagonals) and can overlap each other. Use the word bank below.

Q V A A W H E I Y A S N Y D F Q D Z I B  
Z V O K C V E P O H S N E M O W W F K T  
L Z O L X T R E V E W O R S Z X K Q W B  
T X Q A K U O S I S D V A W B Z W Y V E  
C E G W H N B B R G Z I D P B G O C L F  
U F R E V D E G Q N H S S O U M C C T R  
W I U H T E S B Z R Q T Y N I S A E X R  
V L Y T U R O M V R I E F S E R A M D F  
O W E K R G N Y T B R C S I I L Z Y O S  
L E L L N R I G X T H I A M F G G H P C  
E N L A I O A Y O P N A A S D T P T N L  
Y G A W N U X W K G F E M V E B E A X T  
O I V F G N N Y N M R R S B T N T E M S  
K B N R P D J T Q A Q D W L U W V T N N  
B R I O O G G D U V N C Y O X R E J G E  
A A W G I A W O H T Q B G T R O G H S M  
M L T P N R Y M O Q J N D L L K J E M N  
Q T Z O T A O T L L O K U D C R A T S M  
H A A N R G V M H C H I L L T O P Z A F  
G R A D Z E D N Z C B Q R I R R P Y F V

## Word Bank

- |                 |                       |                   |               |
|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| 1. congo        | 2. teathyme           | 3. twinvalley     | 4. boyertown  |
| 5. turningpoint | 6. frogpond           | 7. wyomissing     | 8. hamburg    |
| 9. eightfifteen | 10. glenside          | 11. menstlc       | 12. hilltop   |
| 13. yasny       | 14. newlife           | 15. wsrq          | 16. oley      |
| 17. walkthewalk | 18. smsg              | 19. womenshope    | 20. robesonia |
| 21. gibraltar   | 22. undergroundgarage | 23. youaremiracle |               |

## *Important Dates in A.A. History*

December 1, 1940 - Chicago Daily Tribune begins a series of articles on AA by Nall Hamilton

December 2, 1943 - Bill speaks to 300 at meeting inside San Quentin

December 5, 1985 - Dave B, founder of Montreal Group dies weeks before 50th anniversary Now his story is in the 4th Edition Big Book.

December 6:

1939 - Bert the Tailor lends Works Publishing \$1000

1979 - Akron Beacon reports death of Henrietta Sieberling

December 7, 1949 - Sister Ignatia accepts Poverello Medal of St Francis on AA's behalf

December 8, 1997 - "As We See It" emailing list started December 8, 1997

December 10:

1975 - "Birds of a Feather" AA group for pilots is formed

1934 - Bill admitted to Towns Hosp 4th/last time (fall '33, '34 in summer, midsummer and final admittance).

1941 - Dallas Morning News reports 1st AA group formed in Dallas

December 12:

1934 - Bill has Spiritual Experience at Towns Hospital

1937 - Bill meets with Rockefeller Foundation and tries to get money

December 13:

1934 - Ebby visited Bill at hospital brought William James's book, "Varieties of Religious Experience".

1937 - Rockland State Mental Hospital takes patients to meeting in New Jersey

December 19, 1939 - Drunks in Los Angeles hold their 1st AA meeting there

December 20, 1945 - Rowland Hazard dies (he carried the Oxford Group message to Ebby)

December 27, 1893 - Rev Samuel Shoemaker is born

### **Other significant events in December for which we have no specific date:**

1934 - Bill & Lois start attending Oxford Group meetings.

1938 - Using Oxford Group principles, Bill closes the loopholes and changes the 6 steps to 12.

1939 - First AA group in mental institution, Rockland State Hospital, NY.

1939 - 1st home meeting in Los Angeles at Kaye M.'s house.

1940 - 1st AA group formed in St. Louis, Missouri

1948 - Dr. Bob's last major talk, in Detroit.

1950 - Grapevine article signed by both Bill & Dr Bob recommend establishing AA General Service Conference.

1955 - 'Man on the Bed' painting by Robert M. 1st appeared in Grapevine. Painting called 'Came to Believe'

1982 - Nell Wing retires from GSO after 35 years of service