

The Alternative

Reading-Berks County Intergroup Newsletter

January 2024

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

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 4th 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 One

“We admitted we were powerless over alcohol ~ that our lives had become unmanageable.”

No other kind of bankruptcy is like this one. Alcohol, now become the rapacious creditor, bleeds us of all self-sufficiency and all will to resist its demands. Once this stark fact is accepted, our bankruptcy as going human concerns is complete.

But upon entering A.A. we soon take quite another view of this absolute humiliation. We perceive that only through utter defeat are we able to take our first steps toward liberation and strength. Our admissions of personal powerlessness finally turn out to be firm bedrock upon which happy and purposeful lives may be built.

Tradition One

“Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.”

Those who look closely soon have the key to this strange paradox. The A.A. member has to conform to the principles of recovery. His life actually depends upon obedience to spiritual principles. If he deviates too far, the penalty is sure and swift; he sickens and dies. At first he goes along because he must, but later he discovers a way of life he really wants to live. Moreover, he finds he cannot keep this priceless gift unless he gives it away. Neither he nor anybody else can survive unless he carries the A.A. message. The moment this Twelfth Step work forms a group, another discovery is made – that most individuals cannot recover unless there is a group. Realization dawns that he is but a small part of a great whole; that no personal sacrifice is too great for preservation of the Fellowship. He learns that the clamor of desires and ambitions within him must be silenced whenever these could damage the group. It becomes plain that the group must survive or the individual will not.

Concept One

“Final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.”

Alcoholics Anonymous has been called an upside-down organization because the ultimate responsibility and final authority for world services resides with the groups, rather than with the trustees, the General Service Board or the General Service Office.

1st Step Prayer

Dear Lord, Help me to see and admit that I am powerless over my alcoholism. Help me to understand how my alcoholism has led to unmanageability in my life. Help me this day to understand the true meaning of powerlessness. Remove from me all denial of my alcoholism.

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

Wilshire Fellowship Group
Come As You Are
Women Living Sober
YASNY Group
Boyertown AA Groups
Frong Pond Group
Leesport Group
Alpha Group

Announcements

2023 NYE Alcathon presented by Reading Berks Intergroup & the Unity committee

Sunday December 31st, doors open at noon

All day potluck! Attendees are encouraged to bring a dish or dessert to share.

(Will also be some catered food options. Sandwiches and Wraps at noon, Pizza and Salads at 2:30 PM, and Tacos at 7:30 PM.)

First meeting starts at 1 PM, each meeting will be 45 minutes and start on the hour except the last meeting which will start at 12:15 AM following the Ball Drop & New Year Celebration at midnight.

Chili Cook-Off at 5 PM and Ice Cream Social at 10 PM (no meeting at these time slots).

Coffee bar to perk up and party!

Recovery Workshops at 2, 4, 7, and 9 PM.

Raffles, Scavenger Hunt, Crafts, Games, and Photo Booth Wall.

Atonement Community Center, 5 Wyomissing Blvd, Wyomissing PA 19610

Nolde Forrest Group is celebrating their 34th Anniversary & the Christmas Holiday

Wednesday December 27th

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 Boyertown Inn Group is having their 3rd Annual New Year's Eve Alcathon

Sunday December 31st

Food and Fellowship start at 5 PM.

Meetings from 5:30 PM to 2 AM (meetings are an hour long with 15 minute breaks in between).

Boyertown Inn, 1 South Reading Ave, Boyertown PA 19512

Announcements (continued)

The Underground Garage Group is having a Holiday Party

Sunday January 7th

Food and fellowship start at 5 PM. Pot luck, please bring a dish or dessert if you are able.

Speaker meeting at 7 PM (Joe V)

Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church, 550 Fleetwood Rd, Bowers PA 19511

The Hilltop Group is Celebrating their 34th Anniversary

Tuesday January 9th

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

The Bridge Fellowship Church, Route 724, Shillington PA

District 33 is holding their District Inventory

Saturday January 6th, 11 AM to 2 PM

All are welcome to attend

St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 117 E Arch St, Fleetwood PA 19522



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 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

Volunteers Needed

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

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 12th 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 (Women and Men)

Clare of Assisi

(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!

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!

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!

Women's Courage to Change

Zoom and In Person

Mondays at 6:30 PM - Hybrid (physical: West Lawn Community Center Building, 103 Woodside 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)

They have a Flyer reaching out to women in recovery

The Topton Group

In Person

Tuesdays at 7 PM

Saint Peter Church

122 West Franklin St, Topton PA 19562

Open Discussion / Speaker meeting

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

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!

Recent Meeting Updates and Changes:

The **Springview Group** will meet at 8 PM during Alcathon on December 31st at Atonement Parish Center instead of St. Johns Church
(normally Sundays at 8 PM at St. John's Lutheran Church at 4125 Penn Ave, Sinking Spring PA 19608)

Freedom From Bondage will meet at Alcathon at Atonement instead of their normal location on December 31st
(normally Sundays 6:30 PM at Wyomissing Church of the Brethren at 2200 State Hill Rd, Reading PA 19610)

You Are A Miracle WILL NOT MEET Monday December 25th nor Monday January 1st. Meetings will resume Monday January 8th
(normally Mondays at 5:30 PM at St. Columbkil Church at 200 Indian Spring Rd, Boyertown PA 19512)

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, upstairs in the chorus room
(Fridays at 7 PM at St. Gabriel's Episcopal Church at 1188 Benjamin Franklin Hwy, Douglassville PA 19518)

The next monthly Reading-Berks Intergroup meeting is 7:00 PM Tuesday, January 23rd, 2024 at One United Church of Christ, 1730 New Holland Rd, Reading PA 19607.

Meetings & Groups 2

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

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

Word Bank

- | | | | |
|-------------------|----------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. happyhour | 2. blandon | 3. liveandletlive | 4. coffeanddonuts |
| 5. friendsofbillw | 6. greatfact | 7. leesport | 8. endoftheline |
| 9. noldeforest | 10. alpha | 11. morgantown | 12. shoey |
| 13. frenchcreek | 14. adventmens | 15. bernville | 16. spiritofrecovery |
| 17. justfortoday | 18. honeybrook | 19. booksandpeople | 20. kutztownlivingsober |

Important Dates in A.A. History

January 1:

1943: Columbus Dispatch reports 1st Anniversary of Columbus AA

1948: First A.A. meeting was held in Japan, (English speaking.)

1988: West Virginia A.A. began first statewide toll-free telephone hotline.

January 2, 2003: Mid-Southern California Archives moved to new location in Riverside.

January 3, 1941: Jack Alexander told Bill Wilson the Oxford Group would be in his Saturday Evening Post.

January 4:

1939: Dr. Bob stated in a letter to Ruth Hock that A.A. had to get away from the Oxford Group atmosphere.

1940: First A.A. group was founded in Detroit, Michigan.

1941: Bill and Lois Wilson drove to Bedford Hills, NY to see Stepping Stones.

January 5, 1941: Bill Wilson told Jack Alexander that Jack was "the toast of A. A. -- in Coca Cola, of course."

January 8, 1938: New York A.A. split from the Oxford Group.

January 10, 1940: 1st AA meeting not in a home meets at King School, Akron, Ohio.

January 13:

1988: Jack Norris, M.D., Chairman/Trustees of A.A. for 27 yrs. died.

2003: Dr. Earle Marsh, author of "Physician Heal Thyself," sober 49 years, died

January 15:

1937: Fitz M brings AA meetings to Washington DC.

1945: First AA meeting held in Springfield, Missouri.

January 17, 1919: 18th amendment, "Prohibition," became law.

January 19:

1943: 1st discussion for starting AA group in Toronto.

1943: Wilson's returned from 1st major A.A. tour started in Oct 24 1943.

1999: Frank M., A.A. Archivist since 1983, died.

January 21, 1951: A.A. Grapevine published memorial issue on Dr. Bob.

January 23, 1961: Bill W. sent an appreciation letter to Dr. Carl Jung for his contribution to A.A.

January 24:

1945: 1st black group St. Louis

1971: Bill Wilson died in Miami, Florida.

January 26, 1971: *New York Times* published Bill Wilson's obituary on page 1.

January 27, 1971: The Washington Post published an obituary of Bill Wilson

January 30, 1961: Dr. Carl Jung answers Bill's letter with "Spiritus Contra Spiritum."