

# *The Alternative*

## Reading-Berks County Intergroup Newsletter

January 2025

[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 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.

## **1<sup>st</sup> 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.*

**Reading-Berks Intergroup Thanks Their Groups for their Support:**

Come As You Are  
Courage to Change  
Frog Pond  
Hilltop Group  
Leesport Group  
Mertztown Group  
Walk the Walk Group  
Wild Bill

(Address for contributions: Reading-Berks Intergroup, PO Box 12157, Reading PA 19612)

**District 33 Thanks Their Groups for their Support:**

Come As You Are  
End of the Line Group  
Leesport Group  
Underground Garage Group

(Address for contributions: D33 Treasurer, PO Box 452, Fleetwood PA 19522)

**District 66 Thanks Their Groups for their Support:**

(Address for contributions: District 66, PO Box 152, Mohnton PA 19540)

**District 67 Thanks Their Groups for their Support:**

(Address for contributions: D67 Treasurer, PO Box 73, Birdsboro PA 19508)

**Announcements**

**Come As You Are Group is having a Cookie Swap**

Sunday December 29<sup>th</sup>

Starts 6 PM with meeting at 7 PM

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

**The Boyertown Inn Group is hosting their 4<sup>th</sup> Annual New Year's Eve Alcothon**

Tuesday December 31<sup>st</sup>

Food and fellowship start at 5 PM with meetings from 5:30 PM to 2 AM

(Meetings are hour long with 15 minute breaks in between.)

1 South Reading Ave, Boyertown PA 19512

## *Announcements (continued)*

### **A 50 Year Remembrance of Recovery at the Atonement Community Center**

Friday January 3<sup>rd</sup>

Brief time of remembrance at 6 PM in Room 4

Pizza and conversation to follow in Room 3

Atonement Parish Center, Lynne Ave & Penn Ave, Wyomissing PA 19610

### **District 66 Presents GSR Orientation Workshop**

Saturday January 4<sup>th</sup>

12:30 PM to 2:30 PM (doors open at noon)

St. Peter's UCC, 2901 Curtis Rd, Reading PA 19609

### **The Hilltop Group is having their 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

Tuesday January 14<sup>th</sup>

Food, fun, and fellowship start at 5:30 PM with speaker meeting at 6:30 PM

*The Bridge Church* (in basement), 902 Philadelphia Ave, Reading PA 19607

### **District 33 is hosting a GSR Orientation Workshop**

Saturday January 18<sup>th</sup>

10 AM to 2 PM (doors open at 9 AM)

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

(Home of the Come As You Are Group and a snow date has been set for Jan. 25<sup>th</sup>.)

### **NERAASA 2025 is coming in February and is virtual this year**

Check the RBI website for details

#### **“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)

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

Plenty to check out:

- Links for activities around our area and beyond
  - Printable schedules in 2 different sizes
  - AA Hotline tear-off forms for all members to print, use, and distribute
- The Contributions page which lists the most up-to-date addresses for Area and GSO
- The most recent info on Area 59 and on GSO and the General Service Conference
  - Link to “We” in both English and Spanish (Your Area 59 quarterly newsletter)
- Information and links for the Grapevine App for your smart phone as well as the Grapevine Podcast
  - Updated and latest version of the RBI Structure Manual

# **Volunteers Needed**

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

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

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

Please contact Chris O or there is a flyer with a QR code that will get you signed up

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

Please contact Trent B

### **“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.

# **Service Commitments**

Please use this QR code to access the most current listing for commitments:



### **Current Active Commitments:**

The Haven, Wernersville, Teen Challenge (Women and Men)

You can also access information for Institution Commitments as well as Prison Commitments on the RBI 12<sup>th</sup> Step Work webpage which is under the Member Services page from the main page of Reading Berks Intergroup.

## *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!

### **The Bottom of the Barrel Group**

In Person

Tuesdays at 7:30 PM

Maidencreek Church at 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: Advent Lutheran Church, 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)

They have a Flyer reaching out to women in recovery

### **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!

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## **Recent Meeting Updates and Changes:**

**\*NEW MEETING\* Reading Young People Meeting** (for both young people and the young at heart).  
**Thursdays 7 PM at the RISE Center, 702 N 8<sup>th</sup> St, Reading PA 19604.**

**The 8:15 AM Group will be moving their weekday meetings starting January 6, 2025 to Kissinger's Lutheran Church at 715 Berkshire Blvd, Wyomissing PA 19610.** Saturday meetings will continue to meet at Kissinger's and Sunday meetings will continue to meet at EDI Leesport.

**The Hilltop Group will not be meeting on Tuesday December 24<sup>th</sup> nor on Tuesday December 31<sup>st</sup>.**

**Walk the Walk** (Tuesdays 5:45 PM to 6:45 PM) **will move starting Tuesday January 7th to Shillington Church of Christ, 475 Philadelphia Ave (Route 724), Shillington PA 19607.**

**The Wyomissing Group** (Thursdays 8 PM to 9 PM) **will move starting Thursday January 2nd to Advent Lutheran Church, 16 Telford Ave, West Lawn PA 19609.**

**"The Tribe"** virtual meeting meets Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays. Wednesdays are speaker meetings, Fridays are Big Book meetings, and Saturdays will be Daily Reflection meetings.  
(ZOOM ID 370705063; PW 364095)

**Friends of Bill W Group** in Bechtelsville has added a meeting to the schedule on Monday nights at 5:30 PM (Mondays 5:30 PM at St. Andrew's Methodist Church at 611 Swamp Creek Rd in Bechtelsville PA 19505)

**The next monthly Reading-Berks Intergroup meeting is 7:00 PM Tuesday, January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at One United Church of Christ, 1730 New Holland Rd, Reading PA 19607.**

## *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."