

The Alternative

Reading-Berks County Intergroup Newsletter

February 2025

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 Two

“Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.”

Step Two is the rallying point for all of us. Whether agnostic, atheist, or former believer, we can stand together on this Step. True humility and an open mind can lead us to faith, and every A.A. meeting is an assurance that God will restore us to sanity if we rightly relate ourselves to Him.

Tradition Two

“For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority – a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.”

If the founder and his friends have served well, they may – to their surprise – be reinstated for a time. If, however, they have heavily resisted the rising tide of democracy, they may be summarily beached. In either case, the group now has a so-called rotating committee, very sharply limited in its authority. In no sense whatever can its members govern or direct the group. They are servants. Theirs is the sometimes thankless privilege of doing the group’s chores. Headed by the chairman, they look after public relations and arrange meetings. Their treasurer, strictly accountable, takes money from the hat that is passed, banks it, pays the rent and other bills, and makes a regular report at business meetings. The secretary see that literature is on the table, looks after the phone-answering service, answers the mail, and sends out notices of meetings. Such are the simple services that enable the group to function. The committee gives no spiritual advice, judges no one’s conduct, issues no orders. Every one of them may be promptly eliminated at the next election if they try this. And so they make the belated discovery that they are really servants, not senators. These are universal experiences. Thus throughout A.A. does the group conscience decree the terms upon which its leaders shall serve.

Concept Two

“The General Service Conference of A.A. has become, for nearly every practical purpose, the active voice and the effective conscience of our whole society in its world affairs.”

2nd Step Prayer

Heavenly Father, I am having trouble with personal relationships. I can’t control my emotional nature. I am prey to misery and depression. I can’t make a living. I feel useless. I am full of fear. I am unhappy. I can’t seem to be of real help to others. I know in my heart that only you can restore me to sanity if I am just willing to stop doubting your power. I humbly ask that you help me to understand that it is more powerful to believe than not to believe and that you are either everything or nothing.

Reading-Berks Intergroup Thanks Their Groups for their Support:

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

District 33 Thanks Their Groups for their Support:

End of the Line Group
Leesport Group
Spirit of Recovery
Sunday Morning Speakers 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

***NEW MEETING* Reading Young People Meeting**

For both young people and the young at heart
Thursdays at 7 PM
RISE Center at 702 N 8th St in Reading PA 19604

NERAASA 2025 is virtual this year and open to all A.A. members and easy to attend as no traveling

February 21st to 23rd

Registration fee: \$35

Hosted by Southern New Jersey Area 45

Check the RBI website for more details or <https://area45snjaa.org/neraasa-2025/>

“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 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 12th Step Work webpage which is under the Member Services page from the main page of Reading Berks Intergroup.

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

Recent Meeting Updates and Changes:

New Life Speakers Group (Fridays 8 PM to 9 PM) **now meeting at West Wyomissing Chapel at 2055 Reading Blvd in West Lawn PA 19609**

The 8:15 AM Group now meeting at Kissinger's Lutheran Church at 715 Berkshire Blvd in Wyomissing PA 19610. (Saturday meetings will continue to meet at Kissinger's and Sunday meetings will continue to meet at EDI Leesport.)

Walk the Walk (Tuesdays 5:45 PM to 6:45 PM) **now meeting at Shillington Church of Christ at 475 Philadelphia Ave (Route 724) in Shillington PA 19607.**

The Wyomissing Group (Thursdays 8 PM to 9 PM) **now meeting at Advent Luthern Church at 16 Telford Ave in West Lawn PA 19609.**

The Nolde Forrest Group has new meeting formats beginning January 1st, 2025. (Wednesdays 7 PM to 8 PM at One United Church of Christ at 1730 New Holland Road in Kenhorst PA 19607.) 1st Wednesday of month is Step Meeting, 2nd Wed. Discussion Meeting, 3rd Wed. Tradition Meeting, 4th Wed. Big Book Study, and 5th Wed. (if applicable) Chairman's Choice (Speaker, Discussion, Other)

"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, February 25th, 2025 at One United Church of Christ, 1730 New Holland Rd, Reading PA 19607.

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

**February 1, 1918:** Original date set for Bill Wilson's marriage to Lois Burnham. The date was moved up because of the war.

**February 2, 1942:** Bill Wilson paid tribute to Ruth Hock, AA's first paid secretary, who resigned to get married. She had written approximately 15,000 letters to people asking for help.

**February 5, 1941:** Pittsburgh Telegram ran a story on the first AA group's Friday night meeting of a dozen "former hopeless drunks."

**February 8:**

**1940:** Bill W., Dr. Bob, and six other AA's asked 60 rich friends of John D. Rockefeller Jr., for money at the Union Club, NY. They got \$2,000.

**February 10, 1922:** Harold E. Hughes was born on a farm near Ida Grove, Iowa. After his recovery from alcoholism, he became Governor of Iowa, a United States Senator, and the leading dark horse for the Presidential Democratic nomination in 1972, until he announced he would not run. He authored the legislation which created the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, and other legislation to help alcoholics and addicts.

**February 11, 1938:** Clarence Snyder ("Home Brewmeister" in 1st, 2nd & 3rd editions) had his last drink.

**February 12, 1945:** World War II paper shortage forced reduction in size of the Big Book.

**February 13, 1940:** With about two years of sobriety, Jim Burwell ("The Vicious Cycle") moved to the Philadelphia area and started the first Philadelphia A.A. group.

**February 14, 1971:** AA groups worldwide held a memorial service for Bill Wilson.

**February 15, 1946:** AA Tribune, Des Moines, IA, reported 36 new members since Marty Mann had been there.

**February 16, 1941:** Baltimore Sunday Sun reported city's first AA group begun in 1940 had grown from 3 to 40 members, with five being women.

**February 18, 1943:** AA's were granted the right to use cars for 12th step work in emergency cases, despite gas rationing.

**February 19, 1967:** Father "John Doe" (Ralph Pfau), 1st Catholic Priest in AA, died.

**February 20, 1941:** The Toledo Blade published first of three articles on AA by Seymour Rothman.

**February 21, 1939:** 400 copies of the Big Book manuscript were sent to doctors, judges, psychiatrists, and others for comment.

**February 22, 1842:** Abe Lincoln addressed the Washington Temperance Society in Springfield, IL.

**February 23, 1959:** AA granted "Recording for the Blind" permission to tape the Big Book.

**February 24, 2002:** Hal Marley, "Dr. Attitude of Gratitude," died. He had 37 years of sobriety. Hal testified, anonymously, before the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse on December 3, 1970.

**February 28, 1940:** 1st organization meeting of Philadelphia AA was held at McCready Huston's room at 2209 Delancy Street.